LEX TALIONIS

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An Analysis of the Forces whose Resultant Produced the Treaty of Versailles

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By WARREN HILLS

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PREFACE

AT the instance of the Supreme War Council the supervision by the respective governments of the Associated Nations over the control of news, which had been highly developed during the war, was perpetuated during the period of the Peace Conference. Under the policy followed at Paris many facts of historical importance remained undisclosed at the time.

Since the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, however, much information has been published piecemeal, as it were, which is of great value to the historian who would describe the events of the seven months following the Armistice.

Deductions from the facts, as made in the following pages, are the author's. The facts themselves are such as have been available for many months to any student who cared to make researches through the files of the daily and periodical press in England, on the Continent, and in the United States.

WARREN HILLS

Baltimore, Md., September 1, 1922.

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CHAPTER I.

The American Peace.

THE purpose of this book is to state the issues of the Great War as they were officially proclaimed, to set forth the character of the agreement which terminated hostilities, and to disclose the forces whose resultant produced the Treaty of Versailles.

Three years have passed since hostilities ceased, and one begins to grow impatient with enthusiasms which were normal when the hazards of war were upon us, but which, if kept alive under artificial stimulation, retard the clearing of the vision which the lapse of the years should bring.

Old Caspar told little Willemina much about the glorious victory of Blenheim, but could not answer her question "what they killed each other for?"

In the hope, then, that the analysis which follows may pursue the methods of sound mental processes, and escape the flaws attributable to too great, or too little, emotional sensitiveness in its treatment of the facts, the story will be told without effort at embellishment and as accurately as may be.

In 1914 the United States had no cause of quarrel with any of the nations of Europe. When war on a major scale began there its causes were not generally understood here, but there was more general sympathy

with the Entente Nations than with the Central Empires. President Wilson urged neutrality "in thought as well as deed." It seemed to be his judgment at that time that the fundamental principles of government for which the United States stood were not jeopardized by the struggle in Europe.

In 1916 the President sought to draw forth an expression of war aims from both sides, with a view to peace negotiation. At that time the protests of the United States against submarine depredations upon neutrals had been heeded, and depredations were not resumed again until February, 1917. On this occasion the President declared that the general objects which statesmen on both sides had in mind were virtually the same, as stated in general terms to their own people and to the world, but that the concrete objects for which the war was being waged had never been set forth. It was suggested that the terms upon which the belligerents on one side and the other would deem it necessary to insist might not be so irreconcilable as some had feared.

This method of making public statements of war aims was thereafter insisted upon by President Wilson, and was for some time opposed by the spokesmen of the Central Empires, one of whom at a later date deprecated the use of "public statements which we shout to each other from the speaker's tribune." They expressed the desire for a conference in some neutral country based upon "a certain degree of mutual confidence in each other's honesty and chivalry."

The reply of the Entente Nations expressed the view that the time had not yet come when a peace which

would be of lasting benefit could be secured. A specific declaration was made, however, that Belgium, Servia and Montenegro must be evacuated and restored, invaded portions of France, Russia and Roumania evacuated, with reparations, and that in the reorganization of Europe the principle of nationalities must be recognized.

On January 22, 1917, in addressing Congress on the subject of his peace proposals of 1916, when the immensity of the devastation was becoming clearer, the President stated that he took it for granted that the peace must be followed by some definite concert of powers, which would make it virtually impossible that any such catastrophe should ever overwhelm us again; that the United States must add their authority and power to that of other nations to guarantee peace and justice throughout the world. He declared against a new balance of power, and advocated that a supernational authority be created, based upon the organized major force of mankind; and outlined some of the settlements afterwards comprised in the Fourteen Points.

The depredations of the German submarines against American commerce on the high seas, which were resumed in February, 1917, and persisted in against repeated protests by the American Government, afforded a casus belli under a principle which the United States had never been slow to defend, and they declared war against Germany in April, 1917.

From this date the aloofness of neutrality was put aside by the American Government, and intimate and

sympathetic relations were entered into with the governments of Great Britain, France and Italy. Their individual war aims became a matter of greater interest to the American Government and the American people, and their distinguished representatives who came to this country to inform us were warmly welcomed. Technical advisers from the French and British Armies taught us the science of trench warfare, and their statesmen and financiers kept our Government advised at Washington.

The European nations had been engulfed in the desperate struggle for more than two years and a half, and these visitors to America bore the impress of it. Most of the military advisors carried the marks of wounds; all felt a deadly hatred of the enemy. It was a revelation to the Americans in training to learn that in trench warfare no quarter was given, and that wounded enemies on the ground were to be dispatched.

Every effort was made by the British, French and Italian Governments and peoples to strengthen the ties of sympathy between themselves and the United States, and to impart to the American people a sense of the cruel and treacherous character of the enemy with which they were now dealing. The quality of the European hatreds was something theretofore unknown in American psychology; it was an exotic watered by a propaganda which utilized without restraint every stimulus that might make it grow.

Day by day full reports of the terrible and heroic struggle were spread before the American readers, the emotional stimulus constantly increased in intensity,

and in 1918 produced and sent to France the great military force known as the A. E. F.

In August, 1917, the United States, then being a belligerent, the President replied to a proposal for peace made by His Holiness, the Pope of Rome, declining it as in substance a return to the status quo ante bellum.[1]

In the Autumn of 1917 Georges Clemenceau succeeded Ribot as Premier of France, and a lack of cooperation among the allies which had hitherto prevailed was overcome by the creation of the Supreme Allied War Council, consisting of the Prime Minister and a military representative of each government.

On November 29 a plenary session of an Inter-Allied Conference was held in Paris, in which sixteen nations were represented. Colonel E. M. House was the chairman of the American delegation. The pur-

[1] In this reply the President set forth the menace of the vast military establishment controlled by the irresponsible German Government, and stated that this power was not the German people but the ruthless master of the German people; that to deal with it in the way proposed would only involve a recuperation of its strength and a renewal of its policy, and that a peace must be based upon the faith of all the peoples involved.

Punitive damages, the dismemberment of empires, the establishment of selfish and exclusive economic leagues, he said, was deemed inexpedient and in the end worse than futile, no proper basis for a peace of any kind, least of all an enduring peace.

"We cannot take the word of the present rulers of Germany as a guarantee of anything that is to endure unless explicitly supported by such conclusive evidence of the will and purpose of the German people themselves as the other peoples of the world would be justified in accepting."

pose of the conference was to bring about coordination of effort and to present a united front to the enemy on the question of terms of peace.

The President, in his fifth annual message to Congress, on December 4, 1917, at a time when Italy was hard-pressed, recommended a declaration of war against the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, and laid stress upon the principle that autocracy must be shown the utter futility of its claims to power or leadership in the modern world.[2]

In this message, in speaking of the common judgment of the nations, the President's words indicated that he spoke for the allied governments also, and this was confirmed when ten days later Mr. Lloyd George, in a speech before the lawyers at Gary's Inn declared Great Britain to be in accord with the statement of war aims made by President Wilson.

In addressing the Commons in December, Mr. Lloyd George stated that British peace terms included the

[2] "When this force is checked and defeated we shall at last be free to do an unprecedented thing, and this is the time to avow our purpose to do it. We shall be free to base peace upon generosity and justice to the exclusion of all selfish claims to advantage even on the part of the victors."

"When autocracy is defeated, when the German people have spokesmen whose word we can believe, and when those spokesmen are ready in the name of their people to accept the common judgment of the nations as to what shall henceforth be the bases of law and of covenant for the life of the world, we shall be willing and glad to pay the full price for peace and pay it ungrudgingly. We know what that price will be. It will be full, impartial justice—justice done at every point, to every nation that the final settlement must affect—our enemies as well as our friends."

restoration of territory occupied by Germany, with reparations, and that the future of the German colonies should be based upon the wishes of the native races.[3]

After Lloyd George's speech to the Trades Unions, he allowed President Wilson to become the exclusive spokesman for the Allies in dealing with Germany. His

[3] The day before the President's speech of January 8, 1918, was delivered, Lloyd George, in an address to the Trade Unions said:

"We are not fighting a war of aggression against the German people. Their leaders have persuaded them that they are fighting a war of self-defense against a league of rival nations bent on the destruction of Germany. The destruction or disruption of Germany has never been a war aim with us. Most reluctantly, and quite unprepared, we were forced to join in the war in self-defense, in defense of violated law in Europe. The British people have never aimed at the breaking-up of the German peoples or the disintegration of their state. Our wish is not to destroy German greatness, Germany's great position in the world, but to turn her aside from schemes of military domination to devote her strength to the beneficent tasks of the world.

"We are not fighting to destroy Austria-Hungary, or to deprive Turkey of its Capital or the rich lands of Asia Minor and Thrace which are predominantly Turkish.

"We are not fighting to destroy the German constitution, although we consider a military autocratic constitution a dangerous anachronism. Our viewpoint is that the adoption of a democratic constitution by Germany would be the most convincing evidence that her old spirit of military domination had indeed died in the war, and it would be much easier for us to conclude a broad democratic peace with her. But that is a question for the German people to decide.

"The days of the Treaty of Vienna are long past. We can no longer submit the future of European civilization to the arbitrary decision of a few negotiators, striving to secure by chicanery or persuasion the interests of this or that dynasty or nation. Therefore, government with the consent of the governed must be the basis of any territorial settlement. For that reason, also, unless treaties are upheld, it is obvious that no treaty of peace can be worth the paper on which it is written."

only expression thereafter on war aims or peace terms was contained in an address to the American soldiers in France on July 5, 1918, in which he said that if the Kaiser and his advisors were prepared to accept the four points mentioned by the President in his speech at Mt. Vernon the day before they could have peace immediately.

The collapse of the resistance of the Soviets against the armies of the Central Empires resulted in the assembling of a peace conference at Brest-Litovsk on December 22, 1917, followed after long negotiations by the signing of a peace treaty on March 4, 1918, involving the cession of much territory and the payment of a heavy indemnity.

These negotiations furnished the occasion of the President's address to Congress on January 8, 1918, which contains the Fourteen Points, and is the first document which forms a part of the actual agreement by which hostilities were brought to an end.

The President's speech of January 8, 1918, adverted to the parleys then in progress at Brest-Litovsk, which had been watched in the hope that it might be possible to extend them into a general conference with regard to terms of peace and settlement. It stated that the representatives of the Central Powers had first presented in that meeting an outline of settlement which, if less definite than that of the Russians, seemed susceptible of liberal interpretation until their specific program of practical terms were added; that that program proposed no concession at all, either to the sovereignty of Russia or to the preferences of the populations, but

meant in a word that the Central Empires were to keep every foot of territory their armed forces had occupied, as a permanent addition to their territories and their power. The President thought that the general principle of settlement first suggested had originated with the more liberal statesmen of Germany and Austria, while the concrete terms came from the military leaders; that the spirit of the settlement did not represent the spirit of the German Reichstag as manifested in July, 1917, but that of the military leaders who resist and defy that intention, and insist upon conquest and subjugation.

It is in response to the need for definition of principle and of purpose, therefore, as shown by the results of the Brest-Litovsk parleys, that the speech of January 8 sets forth the fourteen conditions of peace[4] which, inasmuch as the general preliminary terms of the Brest-

[4] The Fourteen Points were:

1. Open covenants and open diplomacy.
2. Freedom of navigation upon the seas.
3. Removal of economic barriers; equality of trade.
4. Reduction of armaments guaranteed.
5. Impartial adjustment of colonial claims.
6. Evacuation of Russian territory; a free Russia.
7. Evacuation and restoration of Belgium with unlimited sovereignty.
8. Evacuation of French territory; restoration of Alsace-Lorraine.
9. Readjustment of Italian boundaries along lines of nationality.
10. Autonomy for peoples of Austria-Hungary.
11. Evacuation and restoration of Roumania, Servia, and Montenegro; Servia accorded access to sea; relations in Balkan states determined upon historical lines of allegiance and nationality, with international guarantees of territorial integrity.

Litovsk Treaty had been nullified by the specific program of practical terms afterwards added, were clearly intended to present terms so plain and specific that in any final peace settlement additional and inconsistent provisions could not be included.

In addition to the Fourteen Points the speech included clearly-stated principles for the guidance of the peace negotiators.[5]

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12. Turkish sovereignty maintained, but subject nationalities to be free and autonomous, with Dardanelles opened under international guarantees.
13. Independent Poland guaranteed; access to sea.
14. Association of nations.

[5] Among the statements of principles to be accepted are the following:

"It will be our wish and purpose that the processes of peace when they are begun shall be absolutely open, and that they shall involve and permit henceforth no secret understandings of any kind.

"We are willing to fight until such arrangements and covenants are achieved, but only because we wish the right to prevail and desire a just and stable peace, such as can be secured only by removing the chief provocations to war, which this program removes.

"We have no jealousy of German greatness, and there is nothing in this program that impairs it. We grudge her no achievement of distinction or of learning or of pacific enterprise, such as have made her record very bright and enviable. We do not wish to injure her or to block in any way her legitimate influence or power. We do not wish to fight her, either with arms or with hostile arrangements of trade, if she is willing to associate herself with us and the other peace-loving nations of the world in covenants of justice and law and fair dealing. We wish her only to accept a place of equality among the peoples of the world, the new world in which we live, instead of a place of mastery.

"Neither do we presume to suggest to her any alteration or modification of her institutions. But it is necessary, we must frankly say, and necessary as a preliminary to any intelligent dealing with her on

On January 24 the German Chancellor, Count von Hertling discussed this speech in the Reichstag. He expressed general agreement with the first five of the fourteen points, refused to permit interference by the Entente in Russian affairs, and disclaimed a purpose of forcible annexation of Belgium, but refused to discuss the Belgian question until the Entente should admit that the integrity of the territory of the Central Empires was the only possible foundation for peace negotiations.[6]

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our part, that we should know whom her spokesmen speak for when they speak to us, whether for the Reichstag majority or for the military party and the men whose creed is imperial dominion.

"We have spoken now surely in terms too concrete to admit of any further doubt or question. An evident principle runs through the whole program I have outlined. It is the principle of justice to all peoples and nationalities, and their right to live on equal terms of liberty and safety with one another, whether they be strong or weak. Unless this principle is made a part of its foundation no part of the structure of international justice can stand. The people of the United States could act upon no other principle; and to the vindication of this principle they are ready to devote their lives, their honor, and everything they possess."

[6] The Chancellor delivered a general defense of German policy as instituted by Bismark, and reviewed the historic vicissitudes of the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine.

He said that in the recent speech of Lloyd George he failed to recognize a sincere desire for peace or even a friendly spirit. "Between the lines there is always present the suggestion that it is his duty to sit in judgment on guilty Germany for all sorts of crimes."

He thinks that in one respect the tone of President Wilson has changed. "It appears," he says, "that the unanimous rejection by the German people at the time of the attempt of Mr. Wilson in reply to the Papal note, to sow discord between the German Government and the German nation, has done its work. It was possibly this unanimous rejection which led Mr. Wilson on to the right road, and perhaps a beginning has been made, because now there is no longer any question of the suppression of the German nation by an

These January interchanges on the whole seemed to make the prospects of peace remote. The Entente insisted on a declaration of German purpose with regard to Belgium. The Central Empires refused to commit themselves with regard to Belgium so long

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autocratic government, and the former attacks upon the House of Hohenzollern are not repeated." (President Wilson subsequently, however, maintained his demands in this respect.)

He declared that the conditions of the evacuation of the occupied parts of France were to be agreed upon between France and Germany, and that Germany would not give up Alsace-Lorraine.

Points 9, 10, and 11 he left to the Foreign Minister of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy to answer. Point 12 he left to Turkey to answer and pledged his support to that power. The right of the Entente to intervene in Poland (point 13) was denied; and with reference to point 14, an association of nations, he stated that the Imperial Government was willing to investigate the principle of a league of nations after all the other questions in suspense had been settled. "The principles for a general world peace," he said, "we also admit, and they could form points of departure and aims of negotiation. Where, however, concrete questions are concerned—points which are of decisive importance to us and our allies—there the wish for peace is less apparent.

"Our enemies do not wish to destroy Germany, but they cast furtive and covetous glances toward parts of our lands and those of our allies. They speak with respect of Germany's position, but the idea that we are culprits who must do penance and promise reformation, repeatedly makes itself apparent. This is the usual tone of the victor to the vanquished. This also is the tone of the man who points to all our former statements of willingness for peace as mere signs of weakness."

In conclusion, Count von Hertling stated that if fresh proposals of peace were made they would examine them carefully because their aim was no other than the reestablishment of a lasting general peace, but that this lasting general peace was not possible so long as the integrity of the German Empire, the security of her vital interests, and the dignity of the Fatherland were not guaranteed.—(World Almanac, 1919).

as the Entente demanded Alsace-Lorraine, Trieste, the Trentino, Transylvania, and the Banat, whose separation would violate the territorial integrity of the Central Empires.

In his address to Congress on February 11 President Wilson replied to the spokesmen of the Central Empires. He regarded Count Czernin's reply as uttered in a very friendly tone. Count Hertling's reply he considered vague and confusing and as contemplating a settlement effected by individual barter and concession, after which the new League of Nations would have the function of holding the balance of power steadily against external disturbance.

This speech visualizes the war as above all a struggle between the principles of imperialism and democracy, and sees the issue as one which is no longer in the hands of ministries and councils, but one which must now be tried "in the Court of Mankind."[7]

[7] "In view of the infinite sacrifice of these years of tragical suffering no peace can possibly be arrived at in any such fashion. The method the German Chancellor proposes is the method of the Congress of Vienna. We cannot and will not return to that. What is at stake now is the peace of the world. What we are striving for is a new international order based upon broad and universal principles of right and justice, no mere peace of shreds and patches."

"Is it possible Count von Hertling does not see that, does not grasp it; is, in fact, living in his thought in a world dead and gone? Has he utterly forgotten the Reichstag resolutions of the 19th of July, or does he deliberately ignore them? They spoke of the conditions of a general peace—not of national aggrandizement or of arrangements between state and state. * * *"

"Is Count von Hertling not aware that he is speaking in the court of mankind, that all the awakened nations of the world now sit in judgment on what every public man of whatever nation may say

The President's address at Baltimore on April 6, 1918, was full of indignation. Information had been received of the general character of the dictated treaties of Brest-Litovsk signed on March 5. The question he had asked, he said, whether it was justice or dominion and the execution of their own will upon the other nations of the world that the German leaders were seeking, had been answered in unmistakable terms; "They

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on the issues of a conflict which has spread to every region of the world? The Reichstag resolutions of July frankly accepted the decisions of that court. There shall be no annexations, no contributions, no punitive damages. Peoples are not to be handed about from one sovereignty to another by an international conference or an understanding between rivals and antagonists. National aspirations must be respected. Peoples may now be dominated and governed only by their own consent. Self-determination is not a mere phrase. It is an imperative principle of action which statesmen will henceforth ignore at their peril."

The President sets forth four principles to be applied: first, the essential justice of the particular case; second, peoples and provinces are not to be bartered; third, territorial settlements must be made in the interests of the populations concerned; fourth, well defined national aspirations to be accorded satisfaction so far as that can be accorded them. "A general peace erected upon such foundations," he says "can be discussed. Until such a peace can be secured we have no choice but to go on. * * * Our whole strength will be put into this war of emancipation from the threat and attempted mastery of selfish groups of autocratic rulers. * * * *. Having set our hands to the task of establishing a new order of reason and justice we shall not turn back."

The four principles laid down in this address were commented on by Chancellor von Hertling in addressing the Reichstag on February 25. He said that he could fundamentally agree to them and that peace could be discussed on such a basis. At a later date his statement was concurred in by Count Czernin who, however, expressed doubt whether President Wilson would succeed in uniting the allies on such a basis.

have avowed that it was not justice but dominion and the unhindered execution of their own will". The President declared that he accepted the challenge and that the people of the United States accepted it. "There is then but one response possible for us; force, force to the utmost, force without stint or limit, the righteous and triumphant force which shall make right the law of the world and cast every selfish dominion down in the dust."[8]

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[8] In the same address the President also said:

"We have ourselves proposed no injustice or aggression. We are ready whenever the final reckoning is made to be just to the German people, deal justly with the German power, as with all others. There can be no difference between peoples in the final judgment if it is indeed to be a righteous judgment.

"To propose anything but justice, even-handed and dispassionate justice, to Germany at any time, whatever the outcome of the war, would be to renounce and dishonor our own cause. For we ask nothing that we are not ready to accord. * * * For myself I am ready, ready still, ready even now, to discuss a fair and just and honest peace, at any time that it is sincerely proposed—a peace in which the strong and the weak shall fare alike. But the answer, when I proposed such a peace, came from the German commanders in Russia, and I cannot mistake the meaning of the answer."

In March, 1918 the President sent the following to the Congress of Soviets assembled in Moscow:

"May I not take advantage of the meeting of the Congress of the Soviets to express the sincere sympathy which the people of the United States feel for the Russian people at this moment, when the German power has been thrust in to interrupt and turn back the whole struggle for freedom, and substitute the wishes of Germany for the purposes of the people of Russia?

"Although the Government of the United States is unhappily not now in a position to render the direct and effective aid it would wish to render, I beg to assure the people of Russia through the Congress that it will avail itself of every opportunity to secure for Russia once

In his address of May 18, 1918, on the opening of the Red Cross campaign, the President commented on the insincerity of the German peace approaches, and declared his intention to stand by Russia as well as France.

The most critical and decisive moments of the war on the western front were now approaching. The general offensive opened by the Germans in March carried their armies forward month after month. The Russian armies had been disposed of, releasing the German divisions in the east for reinforcement of the line on the western front.[9] On more than one occasion minutes alone intervened between the allied armies and the collapse of the entire allied front.

There were now no optimists in France or England

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more complete sovereignty and independence in her own affairs, and full restoration to her great role in the life of Europe and the modern world. The whole heart of the people of the United States is with the people of Russia in the attempt to free themselves forever from autocratic government and become the masters of their own life."

[9] Foreign Secretary von Kuhlmann, in a debate in the Reichstag on June 24, while the great German offensive of 1918 was in progress, reiterated the condition that the absolute integrity of the German Empire and its allies formed the necessary requisite condition for entering into peace discussion or negotiations.

He referred to the reproach made by English statesmen that Germany was not prepared to state its attitude publicly on the Belgian question, and declared that the fundamental views of the German Imperial Government differed from those ascribed to it. Belgium, he said, was one question in the entire complex. He refused to make a statement on this point that would bind Germany without binding the enemy. He reiterated that the German peace offers had been more specific than those of the Entente. He denied German ambitions of domination in Europe, deprecated the present tendency

on the question of the outcome of the war. German shells were falling in Paris. There was one ray of hope only in the deep gloom that enfolded the future—that the powerful, fresh American army could be thrown into the line in time to save the situation.

Fortunately the American troops were now arriving in France in great and increasing numbers. Foch was no longer compelled to husband his dwindling European reserves. On July 18 he was enabled to open a general counter-offensive which checked the German advance and constituted the turning-point of the war. From that day the German line was forced to retire steadily in a movement that continued until November 11, 1918, when the armistice was signed and hostilities came to an end.

It was on July 4, before the change for the better in the strategic situation had come, and anxiety in the United States and among the Allies had raised the public mind to a high emotional pitch, that President Wilson took occasion to address the Diplomatic Corps in Washington, during ceremonies held before the tomb of Washington at Mt. Vernon.

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to regard overtures of peace as peace offensives or traps, claimed enormous military resources for Germany, and declared that the idea of victory for the Entente was a dream and an illusion. "We wish," he said, "for the German people and our allies a free, strong, independent existence within the boundaries drawn for us by history. We desire overseas possessions corresponding to our greatness and wealth, the freedom of the sea, conveying our trade to all parts of the world. These, in brief, are our roughly sketched aims, the realization of which is absolutely vital and necessary for Germany." He placed the responsibility for the war chiefly on Russia and France. —(World Almanac, 1919.)

Since the President's address to Congress on January 8, 1918, formulating the issues of the war the allied chancelleries had remained silent. The formation of the Supreme War Council in Europe had created unity of political action, and Colonel E. M. House, representing the President of the United States, was the agent through whom coordination of European and American war aims were being effected. The Allied Nations now endorsed and accepted the leadership of President Wilson, and his utterances were accepted as those of the allies as well as of the United States. Unless subsequently dissented from, the principles of settlement which President Wilson might propose to the enemy would be binding upon the allies.

In unmistakable words the President, on July 4, proclaimed the issue of the war to be one between democracy and autocracy, and that the settlement must be final. He declared the following to be the ends for which the associated peoples of the world were fighting, and that they must be conceded them before there could be peace:

1. The destruction of any arbitrary power anywhere that can separately, secretly, and of its own single choice, disturb the peace of the world; or, if it cannot be presently destroyed, at the least its reduction to virtual impotence.

2. The settlement of every question, whether of territory or sovereignty, of economic arrangement, or of political relationship, upon the basis of the free acceptance of that settlement by the people immediately concerned, and not upon the basis of the material interest or advantage of any other nation or

people which may desire a different settlement for the sake of its own exterior influence or mastery.

3. The consent of all nations to be governed in their conduct toward each other by the same principles of honor and of respect for the common law of civilized society that govern the individual citizens of all modern states in their relations with one another; to the end that all promises and covenants may be sacredly observed, no private plots or conspiracies hatched, no selfish injuries wrought with impunity, and a mutual trust established upon the *handsome* foundations of a mutual respect for right.

4. The establishment of an organization for peace which shall make it certain that the combined power of free nations will check every invasion of right, and serve to make peace and justice the more secure by affording a definite tribunal of opinion to which all must submit, and by which every international readjustment that cannot be amicably agreed upon by the people directly concerned shall be sanctioned."

On the same day the President delivered a "four-minute" address to the American nation. It pointed out how the spirit of self-government had spread and grown and triumphed since the birth of our Republic, and how we were now fighting for our national existence against the menace of autocracy. It referred to the recognition now demanded by the subjugated races of Austria-Hungary, and asked that Americans unite with the representatives of those races "in making this our Independence Day the first that shall be consecrated to a declaration of independence for all the peoples of the world".

The vast and novel conception of the meaning of the war and of the results which the victory of the associated nations must secure, was now clearly stated

by President Wilson. The Fourth of July address in 1918 meant:

1. That no compromise peace with the Central Empires as then constituted, would be made.

2. That justice demanded that their territorial integrity, depending upon the principle of imperialism, be destroyed.

3. That parleys for peace would not be arranged until after internal changes of a constitutional nature had transferred all power to legislatures solely responsive to the people.

It meant nothing less than the destruction of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, as the independence of the "submerged nations" was equivalent not to dismemberment but to dissection of its body.

It is hardly possible that these principles would have been evolved by the statesmen of the Entente Governments. Their eyes were not fixed on constitutional reforms, but were riveted upon the issue of victory or defeat in the war. It so happened that President Wilson's utterances dedicated the power of the United States to the overthrow of the Hohenzollerns and the Hapsburgs, and to the dismemberment of their empires. This was enough to secure the avowed adherence of the Entente statesmen to his principles and purposes, which, moreover, did not involve crossing any bridges of constitutional reform in their own countries until after the war was over.

The paramount war aim which the President was now pushing to decision was the overthrow of the political principle of empire, which he believed to belong to a world dead and gone, and its replacement by the principle of democracy everywhere, under which prin-

ciple legislatures and executives would be responsive to the will of the people.

A more conservative position, which a consideration of the structure of the Entente Governments might have recommended as appropriate under the circumstances, would have been one which demanded merely the modification of the autocratic regimes in Central Europe, under which the people were oppressed and denied their rightful voice in government; one which would not have demanded the territorial amputation of their empires, but which would have been satisfied by the assurance of autonomy for the oppressed provinces, and the curbing of the power of the autocratic rulers. This would have left the door open for negotiations which might have made it possible for the war to have been ended on a practicable basis before the entire stored-up wealth of the peoples of Europe had been destroyed.

For the political principle which, in fact, underlay the Governments of Great Britain, France and Italy, was empire. Their methods of administration were less autocratic and arbitrary than those of the Central Empires, but the difference was one of degree and not of kind, and they were in no sense democracies as that word finds application in America. In the confusion of thought which the turmoil of war introduced they took on the character of democracies in American eyes and in the American sense, and this process was powerfully aided by the protestations of their propaganda

that they were in fact democracies. This illusion seemed to be present in the mind even of Mr. Wilson himself.

A great draft system was now in operation in the United States, on a scale which would ensure the enrollment of the entire fighting material of the country if it should become necessary. In his draft proclamation of August 31 the President said;

"We solemnly purpose a decisive victory of arms and deliberately to devote the larger part of the military man power of the nation to the accomplishment of that purpose".

In his Labor Day message of September 1 he said:

"It is a war to make the nations and peoples of the world secure against every such power as the German autocracy represents. It is a war of emancipation. Not until it is won can men everywhere live free from constant fear, or breathe freely while they go about their daily tasks, and know that governments are their servants and not their masters."

Within the Austro-Hungarian Empire the disaffection among the subject races, now powerfully encouraged by Entente support, was getting out of hand. As early as June 30, 1918, France had recognized Czecho-Slovakia as an independent state, and on September 15 the United States recognized it as a co-belligerent with a de facto government. Recognition of the independence of the Jugoslavs also was contemplated. Prague, Laibach and Agram were centers of revolution.

On September 15 Baron Burian, Austro-Hungarian Prime Minister, addressed a long communication to all the belligerent states suggesting a compromise peace and adverting to the consequences to Europe of a con-

tinued struggle, but still insisting on the territorial integrity of the Central Empires.[10]

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[10]The Austro-Hungarian peace proposal was as follows:

"Although it was declined by the enemy powers, the peace proposal made on December 12, 1916, by the four Allied Powers, which never desisted from the conciliatory intent that had prompted it, nevertheless was the beginning of a new phase in the history of this war. From that day the question of peace after two and a half years of fierce struggle suddenly became the main topic of discussion in Europe, nay, in the world, and has been steadily gaining prominence ever since. From that day nearly every belligerent state has repeatedly voiced its opinion on the subject of peace.

"The discussion, however, was not carried on along the same lines. Viewpoints varied according to the military and political conditions, and so, thus far at least, no tangible or practical result has been achieved. Notwithstanding those fluctuations a lessening of the distance between the viewpoints of the two parties could be noted, though no attempt will be made to deny the great divergencies of opinion which divide the two enemy camps and which it has heretofore been impossible to reconcile. One may be, nevertheless, permitted to notice that some of the extreme war aims have been departed from, and that the fundamental basis of a universal peace is to some extent agreed upon. There is no doubt that on either side the desire of the peoples to reach an understanding and bring about peace is becoming more and more manifest. The same impression is created when the manner in which the peace proposal of the four allied powers was received in the past is compared with the subsequent utterances of their adversaries, whether they came from responsible statesmen or from personages holding no office, but likewise wielding political influence. By way of illustration confined to a few instances, the Allies in their reply to President Wilson's note advanced claims which meant nothing less than the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary, the mutilation and radical changes in the political structure of Germany, and also the annihilation of European Turkey. With time, those terms that could not be enforced without a crushing victory were modified or partly abandoned by some of the official declarations of the Entente.

"Thus Mr. Balfour, in the course of last year, plainly declared to the English Parliament that Austria-Hungary was to solve her domestic

problems by herself and that Germany could not be given another constitution through foreign influence. Mr. Lloyd George afterward announced in the beginning of this year that the Allies were not fighting for the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary or to despoil the Ottoman Empire of its Turkish provinces, or, again, to bring internal reforms to Germany. We may also add that in December, 1917, Mr. Balfour categorically repudiated the assumption that British policy had pledged itself to create an independent state including the German territory lying on the left bank of the Rhine. As for the utterances of the Central Powers, they leave no doubt that those states are merely fighting to defend the integrity and safety of their territories. Much greater than in respect to concrete war aims is the evidence that the principles upon which peace could be concluded and a new order of things established in Europe and throughout the world have in a way drawn nearer to one another. On this point President Wilson in his addresses of February 12 and July 4, 1918, formulated principles that have raised no objection from his Allies and whose wide application will shortly meet the objections from the four Allied Powers provided to be general and consistent with the vital interests of the states concerned. To agree upon general principles, however, would not suffice; an agreement should also be reached as to their interpretation and application to the several concrete questions of war and peace.

"To an unprejudiced observer there can be no doubt that in all the belligerent states, without exception, the desire for a compromise peace has been enormously strengthened; that the conviction is increasing that the further continuance of the bloody struggle must transform Europe into ruins and into a state of exhaustion that will check its development for decades to come—and this without any guarantee of thereby bringing about the decision by arms which four years of efforts, hardships, and immense sacrifices have failed to bring about. Now, by what means, in what manner can the way be paved that will finally lead to such a compromise? Can any one in earnest expect that goal to be attained by adhering to the method heretofore followed in the discussion of the peace problem? We dare not answer that question in the affirmative. The discussion as conducted until now from one rostrum to another by the statesmen of the several countries was substantially but a series of monologues. It lacked sequence above all. Speeches delivered, arguments expounded by the orators of the opposite parties, received no direct immediate reply.

Again, the publicity of those utterances, the places where they were delivered, excluded every possible serviceable result. In such public utterances the eloquence used is of the high-pitched kind which is intended to thrill the masses. Whether, intentionally or not, the gap between conflicting ideas is thus widened. Misunderstandings that can not easily be eradicated spring up, and a simple, straightforward exchange of ideas is hampered as soon as mentioned, and even before an official answer can be made by the adversary every declaration of the statesmen in power is taken up for passionate and immoderate discussion by irresponsible persons, but the statesmen themselves are obsessed by a fear that they may unfavorably influence public opinion in their country and thereby compromise the chances of the war, and also of prematurely disclosing their true intentions. That is why they use thunderlike (the French text has 'donnantes' which is here meaningless; tonnantes, with the given meaning herewith was probably the word sent and distorted in transmission) speech and persist in upholding unflinching points of view. If therefore it were intended to seek the basis for a compromise apt to make an end of the war whose prolongation would mean nothing but suicide, and to save Europe from that catastrophe resort should be had in any event to some other method which would permit of continuous and direct converse between the representatives of the governments and between them only. Such an exchange of views would take in the conflicting views of the several belligerent states to the same extent as the general principles on which to build up peace and the relations between states, and might first lead to an understanding as to those principles. The fundamental principles once agreed upon, an effort should be made in the course of the informal negotiations to apply them concretely to the several peace questions and thereby bring about their solution. We indulge the hope that none of the belligerents will object to this proposed exchange of views. There would be no interruption of military operations. The conversation would go no further than deemed useful by the participants; the parties concerned could be put to no disadvantage thereby. The exchange of views, far from doing any harm, could be but beneficial to the cause of peace; what might fail at the first attempt could be tried over again; something will at least have been done toward elucidating the problems. How many are the deep-rooted misunderstandings that might be dispelled! How many the new ideas that would break their way out! Humane sentiments so long pent up could burst forth from all hearts, creating

The reply of the Government of the United States dated September 17, declined to entertain the Austro-Hungarian proposals.[11]

The last public utterance which forms a part of the terms of peace finally agreed upon with Germany was President Wilson's speech of September 27, opening the Liberty Loan drive, giving further definition to the issues which must be squarely met before the war is ended.[12]

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a warmer atmosphere while safeguarding every essential point and dispel many a discussion which at this time seems important. We are convinced that it is the duty of all belligerents to mankind to take up together the questions whether there is no way, after so many years of a struggle which, notwithstanding all the sacrifices it has cost, is still undecided and the whole course of which seems to demand a compromise, of bringing this awful war to an end. The imperial and royal government therefore comes again to the governments of all the belligerent states with a proposal shortly to send to a neutral country, upon a previous agreement as to the date and place, delegates who would broach a confidential nonbinding conversation over the fundamental principles of a peace that could be concluded. The delegates would be commissioned to communicate to one another the views of their respective governments on the aforesaid principles and very freely and frankly interchange information on every point for which provision should be made."—(World Almanac, 1919.)

[11]The Government of the United States feels that there is only one reply which it can make to the suggestion of the imperial Austro-Hungarian government. It has repeatedly, and with entire candor, stated the terms upon which the United States would consider peace and can and will entertain no proposal for a conference upon a matter concerning which it has made its position and purpose so plain.

[12]The substance of the speech of September 27 is as follows:

"We will accept no outcome of the war which does not squarely meet and settle the following issues:

"Shall the military power of any nation or group be suffered to

About one week later, direct negotiations, initiated by wireless proposals from the German Chancellor for an armistice began, and were continued until November 5 when agreement was reached. Their contents are set forth in the following chapter.

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determine the fortunes of peoples over whom they have no right to rule except the right of force?

"Shall strong nations be free to wrong weak nations and make them subject to their purpose and interest?

"Shall peoples be ruled and dominated, even in their internal affairs, by arbitrary and irresponsible force, or by their own will and choice?

"Shall there be a common standard of right and privilege for all peoples and nations, or shall the strong do as they will and the weak suffer without redress?

"Shall the assertion of right be haphazard and by casual alliance, or shall there be a common court to oblige the observation of common rights?

"No peace shall be obtained by any kind of compromise or abatement of these principles. All who sit down at the peace table shall come ready and willing to pay the price—impartial justice in every item of the settlement, no matter whose interest is crossed."

Five principles follow:

1. The impartial justice meted out must involve no discrimination between those to whom we wish to be just and those to whom we do not wish to be just. It must be a justice that plays no favorites and knows no standard but the equal rights of the several peoples concerned.

2. No special or separate interest of any single nation, or any group of nations, can be made the basis of any part of the settlement which is not consistent with the common interest of all.

3. There can be no leagues or alliances or special covenants or understandings within the general or common family of the league of nations.

4. There can be no special selfish economic combinations within the league, and no employment of any form of economic boycott or exclusion, except as the power of economic penalty by exclusion from

the markets of the world may be vested in the league of nations itself as a means of discipline and control.

5. All international agreements and treaties of every kind must be made known in their entirety to the rest of the world.

It is further stated that the United States will enter into no special arrangements or understandings with particular nations.

CHAPTER II.

The Peace Agreement.

THE general cause of the Central Empires was lost when, simultaneously with the victorious northward sweep of Allenby through Syria, the Army of the Orient threw the reconstituted Servian forces, supported by British, French and Greek troops, against the Bulgarian line on September 15, 1918, and won a complete and decisive victory.

This victory compelled an armistice on September 29, under the terms of which Bulgaria evacuated all the territories she had taken from Greece and Servia, and placed her railroads leading into Central Europe at the disposal of the Entente forces.

On this date the Turkish menace in the rear of the Army of the Orient was fast crumbling. Allenby's army, with light cavalry drawn from Turkey's disaffected Saracenic provinces forming its right wing, advancing northward from Jerusalem, isolated and captured a Turkish army of 40,000 men on September 20. Thereafter the Turkish forces on both sides of the Jordan gave way and began to surrender in groups. Damascus was taken on October 1st, Aleppo on October 26, and Turkey signed an armistice on October 31. In Mesopotamia the advance of the British force under Townsend had hastened the Turkish surrender.

After Allenby's victory on September 20, the Army of the Orient no longer feared the Turkish menace on its flank, and was therefore free to follow up the advantage it had gained to the north.

The southern frontiers of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy were now threatened. The internal disaffection of the Czechs, Slavs and Croats was getting out of hand.[13]

On October first, therefore, Berlin was aware of the collapse of the Bulgarian front, of Allenby's victories in Syria, and of the political dissolution in Austria-Hungary.

These reverses in a distant terrain had no immediate strategic effect upon the military situation on the western front. There the slow German retreat from the heart of France was being conducted in good order. It was no different in its character from similar movements which from time to time during the war had been conducted by both sides, in which an offensive on an over-extended front could no longer be maintained.

The reverses of Germany's allies did, however, have a direct bearing on political policy in Berlin. The great objects of the war were seen to be definitely lost. It remained only to make the best terms possible for Germany while a vigorous military defensive was being maintained.

[13]After recognition of the belligerency of the Czechs by the United States on September 15, Prague, Laibach and Agram became centers of open revolution. President Wilson declined to grant an armistice until the independence of these nationalities was recognized. The Austrian front collapsed on October 24 and the overwhelming Italian victory of Vittorio Veneto completed the overthrow of the Empire.

Hence, after conferences between the civil heads of state, leaders of the Great General Staff, and representatives of the majority parties in the Reichstag, Prince Maximilian of Baden on October 2 succeeded von Hertling as Chancellor, and on October 4, in a note which was transmitted to President Wilson by wireless, offered to make peace on the basis of President Wilson's address of January 8, 1918, and his later pronouncements, and to conclude an armistice.[14]

The President replied on October 8,[15] and direct

[14]"The German Government requests the President of the United States of America to take a hand in the restoration of peace, acquaint all belligerent states with this request, and invite them to send plenipotentiaries for the purpose of opening negotiations.

"It accepts the program set forth by the President of the United States in his message to Congress of January 8, 1918, and in his later pronouncements, especially his speech of September 27, as a basis for peace negotiations.

"With a view to avoiding further bloodshed the German Government requests the immediate conclusion of an armistice on land, on water, and in the air."

[15]"Before making reply to the request of the Imperial German Government, and in order that the reply shall be as candid and straightforward as the momentous interests involved require, the President of the United States deems it necessary to assure himself of the exact meaning of the note of the Imperial Chancellor. Does the Imperial Chancellor mean that the Imperial German Government accepts the terms laid down by the President in his address to the Congress of the United States in January last and in subsequent addresses, and that its object in entering into discussion would be only to agree upon the practical details of their application?

"The President feels bound to say with regard to the suggestion of an armistice that he would not feel at liberty to propose a cessation of arms to the governments with which the Government of the United States is associated against the Central Powers so long as the armies of those powers are upon their soil. The good faith of

negotiations by wireless continued until November 5, when agreement was reached.

The President's reply of October 8 was framed to elicit a categorical acceptance of the terms laid down in his speeches, so that discussions would only involve the practical details of their application. The offer of an armistice was declined so long as the armies of the Central Powers were on the soil of the associated governments. The consent of the Central Empires immediately to withdraw their forces everywhere from invaded territory was suggested as a condition upon which the good faith of any discussion would manifestly depend. Thirdly, the President asked whether the Imperial Chancellor was speaking merely for the constituted authorities of the Empire who had so far conducted the war, and stated that he deemed the answers to those questions vital from every point of view.

The German reply of October 12 was an unqualified acceptance of the President's proposals. It stated that the present German Government had been formed by conferences and in agreement with the great majority of the Reichstag and spoke in the name of the German people. The meeting of a mixed commission for making the necessary arrangements concerning the evacuation was suggested.[16]

any discussion would manifestly depend upon the consent of the Central Powers immediately to withdraw their forces everywhere from invaded territory. The President also feels that he is justified in asking whether the Imperial Chancellor is speaking merely for the constituted authorities of the Empire who have so far conducted the war. He deems the answer to these questions vital from every point of view."

At this point it is advisable to view these interchanges in connection with the strategic situation on the western front. The inference to be plainly drawn from the President's note was that peace might be made upon the terms which he had already formulated. The German statesmen desired such a peace, and therefore addressed their efforts toward the conclusion of an armistice upon that basis. The first step in the proceedings was indicated by President Wilson to be the evacuation of allied territory.

After October 8, therefore, the strategic purposes of the great general staff were different from its purposes preceding that date. If, as seems probable, its earlier purpose had been to make a stand somewhere in the rear, in prepared trenches, that purpose was

[16]"The German Government has accepted the terms laid down by President Wilson in his address of January 8 and in his subsequent addresses on the foundation of a permanent peace of justice. Consequently its object in entering into discussions would be only to agree upon practical details of the application of these terms. The German Government believes that the Governments of the powers associated with the Government of the United States also take the position taken by President Wilson in his address. The German Government, in accordance with the Austro-Hungarian Government, for the purpose of bringing about an armistice, declares itself ready to comply with the propositions of the President in regard to evacuation. The German Government suggests that the President may occasion the meeting of a mixed commission for making the necessary arrangements concerning the evacuation. The present German Government, which has undertaken the responsibility for this step toward peace, has been formed by conferences and in agreement with the great majority of the Reichstag. The Chancellor, supported in all his actions by the will of the majority, speaks in the name of the German Government and of the German people."—(World Almanac, 1919.)

changed after October 8, in response to directions from Berlin, which had now entered into an understanding with the associated governments to withdraw at once from occupied territory as a preliminary condition of agreement. The retreat was now being made for reasons which were not solely military. Military historians of the future would be led into error if this political fact and factor were ignored in their studies of conditions on the western front in October.

The President replied without delay to the German note of the 12th, dispatching his answer October 14. He made it clear that the process of evacuation and the conditions of an armistice must be left to the judgment and advice of the military advisers of the Government of the United States and the Allied Governments, and that no arrangement could be accepted which did not safeguard and guarantee the maintenance of the present military supremacy of the armies of the United States and of the allies in the field. The cessation of illegal and inhuman practices was another condition laid down. Then came a plain and unmistakable demand for the overthrow, before the negotiations for the armistice were closed, of the Kaiser and the House of Hohenzollern. It was as follows;

"It is necessary also in order that there may be no possibility of misunderstanding that the President should very solemnly call the attention of the Government of Germany to the language and plain intent of one of the terms of peace which the German Government has now accepted. It is contained in the address of the President delivered at Mount Vernon on the Fourth of July last. It is as follows; 'The destruction of every arbitrary

power anywhere that can separately, secretly, and of its single choice disturb the peace of the world; or, if it cannot be presently destroyed, at least its reduction to virtual impotency. The power which has hitherto controlled the German nation is of the sort here described. It is within the choice of the German nation to alter it. The President's words just quoted naturally constitute a condition precedent to peace, if peace is to come by the action of the German people themselves. The President feels bound to say that the whole process of peace will in his judgment depend on the definiteness and the satisfactory character of the guarantees which can be given in this fundamental matter. It is indispensable that the Governments associated against Germany should know beyond a peradventure with whom they are dealing."[17]

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[17]"The unqualified acceptance by the present German Government and by a large majority of the Reichstag of the terms laid down by the President of the United States of America in his address to the Congress of the United States on the 8th of January, 1918, and in his subsequent addresses justifies the President in making a frank and direct statement of his decision with regard to the communications of the German Government of the 8th and 12th of October, 1918.

It must be clearly understood that the process of evacuation and the conditions of an armistice are matters which must be left to the judgment and advice of the military advisors of the government of the United States and the allied governments, and the President feels it his duty to say that no arrangement can be accepted by the government of the United States which does not provide absolutely satisfactory safeguards and guarantees of the maintenance of the present military supremacy of the armies of the United States and of the allies in the fields.

He feels confident that he can safely assume that this will also be the judgment and decision of the allied governments.

The President feels that it is also his duty to add that neither the government of the United States nor, he is quite sure, the governments with which the government of the United States is associated as belligerent will consent to consider an armistice so long as the

armed forces of Germany continue the illegal and inhumane practices which they still persist in.

At the very time that the German government approaches the government of the United States with proposals of peace its submarines are engaged in sinking passenger ships at sea, and not the ships alone but the very boats in which their passengers and crews seek to make their way to safety; and in their present enforced withdrawal from Flanders and France the German armies are pursuing a course of wanton destruction which has always been regarded as in direct violation of the rules and practices of civilized warfare. Cities and villages, if not destroyed, are being stripped not only of all they contain, but often of their very inhabitants.

The nations associated against Germany cannot be expected to agree to a cessation of arms while acts of inhumanity, spoliation and desolation are being continued which they justly look upon with horror and with burning hearts.

It is necessary, also, in order that there may be no possibility of misunderstanding, that the President should very solemnly call the attention of the government of Germany to the language and plain intent of one of the terms of peace which the German government has now accepted. It is contained in the address of the President delivered at Mount Vernon on the Fourth of July last.

It is as follows: "The destruction of every arbitrary power anywhere that can separately, secretly, and of its single choice disturb the peace of the world; or, if it cannot be presently destroyed, at least its reduction to virtual impotency."

The power which has hitherto controlled the German nation is of the sort here described. It is within the choice of the German nation to alter it. The President's words just quoted naturally constitute a condition precedent to peace, if peace is to come by the action of the German people themselves. The President feels bound to say that the whole process of peace will, in his judgment, depend upon the definiteness and the satisfactory character of the guarantees which can be given in this fundamental matter. It is indispensable that the governments associated against Germany should know beyond a peradventure with whom they are dealing.

The President will make a separate reply to the royal and imperial government of Austria-Hungary."

The German reply of October 20[18] agrees that the process of evacuation and the conditions of an armistice shall be left to the military advisors, and assumes that the actual standard of power on both sides in the field shall form the basis for arrangements safeguarding and guaranteeing that standard. The trust is expressed that the President will approve of no demand which would be irreconcilable with the honor of the German

[18]"In accepting the proposal for an evacuation of occupied territories the German Government has started from the assumption that the procedure of this evacuation and of the conditions of an armistice should be left to the judgment of the military advisers, and that the actual standard of power on both sides in the field has to form the basis for arrangements safeguarding and guaranteeing this standard. The German Government suggests to the President that an opportunity should be brought about for fixing the details. It trusts that the President of the United States will approve of no demand which would be irreconcilable with the honor of the German people and with opening a way to a peace of justice.

"The German Government protests against the reproach of illegal and inhumane actions made against the German land and sea forces and thereby against the German people. For the covering of a retreat destructions will always be necessary, and they are carried out in so far as is permitted by international law. The German troops are under the most strict instruction to spare private property and to exercise care for the population to the best of their ability. Where transgressions occur in spite of these instructions the guilty are being punished. The German Government further denies that the German Navy in sinking ships has ever purposely destroyed lifeboats with their passengers. The German Government proposes with regard to all those charges that the facts be cleared up by neutral commissions.

"In order to avoid anything that might hamper the work of peace, the German Government has caused orders to be despatched to all submarine commanders precluding the torpedoing of passenger ships, without, however, for technical reasons, being able to guarantee that

people and with opening a way to a peace of justice. After enumerating fundamental constitutional changes which had just been effected, the note concluded:

"The question of the President—with whom he and the Governments associated against Germany are dealing—is therefore answered in a clear unequivocal manner by the statement that the offer of peace and an armistice has come from a government which is free from any arbitrary and irresponsible in-

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these orders will reach every single submarine at sea before its return. As a fundamental condition for peace the President prescribes the destruction of every arbitrary power that can separately, secretly and of its own single choice disturb the peace of the world. To this the German Government replies: Hitherto the representation of the people in the German Empire has not been endowed with an influence on the formation of the Government. The Constitution did not provide for a concurrence of representation of the people in decisions of peace and war. These conditions have just now undergone a fundamental change. A new Government has been formed in complete accordance with the wishes (principle) of the representation of the people, based on equal, universal, secret, direct franchise.

"The leaders of the great parties of the Reichstag are members of this Government. In the future no Government can take or continue in office without possessing the confidence of a majority of the Reichstag. The responsibility of the Chancellor of the empire to the representation of the people is being legally developed and safeguarded. The first act of the new Government has been to lay before the Reichstag a bill to alter the Constitution of the empire so that the consent of the representation of the people is required for decisions on war and peace. The permanence of the new system is, however, guaranteed not only by constitutional safeguards but also by the unshakable determination of the German people, whose vast majority stands behind these reforms and demands their energetic continuance.

"The question of the President—with whom he and the Governments associated against Germany are dealing—is therefore answered in a clear, unequivocal manner by the statement that the offer of peace and an armistice has come from a Government which is free from any arbitrary and irresponsible influence and is supported by the approval of an overwhelming majority of the German people."

(World Almanac, 1919.)

fluence and is supported by the approval of an overwhelming majority of the German people."

The President replied on October 23 to the effect that having received assurances from the German Government he felt that he could not decline to take up with the associated governments the question of an armistice; that the armistice must leave the associated powers in a position to enforce any arrangements that might be entered into, and to make a renewal of hostilities on the part of Germany impossible; that if such an armistice was suggested by the military advisors of the associated nations the acceptance of its terms by Germany would afford the best concrete evidence of her unequivocal acceptance of the terms and principles of peace from which the whole action proceeded. The President stated candidly that those extraordinary safeguards were demanded because of the doubt that remained whether the arbitrary and untrustworthy autocracy had been curbed, or that the changes now partly agreed upon would be permanent; that even if the future wars had been brought under the control of the German people the present war had not been. He continued in words which began to take on the essence of finality:

"It is evident that the German people have no means of commanding the acquiescence of the military authorities of the Empire in the popular will; that the power of the King of Prussia to control the Empire is unimpaired; that the determining initiative still remains with those who have hitherto been the masters of Germany.

"Feeling that the whole peace of the world depends now

upon plain speaking and straightforward action, the President deems it his duty to say, without any attempt to soften what may seem harsh words, that the nations of the world do not and cannot trust the word of those who have hitherto been the masters of German policy, and to point out once more that in concluding peace and attempting to undo the infinite injuries and injustices of this war, the Government of the United States cannot deal with any but veritable representatives of the German people who have been assured of a genuine constitutional standing as the real rulers of Germany.

"If it must deal with the military masters and monarchical autocrats of Germany now, or if it is likely to have to deal with them later, in regard to the international obligations of the German Empire, it must demand, not peace negotiations, but surrender."

This demand for the overthrow of autocracy, foreshadowed in the President's reply to the Pope in 1917, first clearly sounded after the arbitrary settlements of the Brest-Litovsk treaties were known, and afterwards solemnly proclaimed at Mount Vernon, had grown constantly more insistent and more explicit in the President's successive definitions of war aims. In these October notes he is at grips with the principle, and the pressure grows progressively heavier and more relentless. The words in this note take the quality of inexorable fate and of doom:

"The moving finger writes, and having writ moves on;
Nor all your piety nor wit
Can lure it back to cancel half a line;
Nor all your tears wash out a word of it."

To this communication the German Government replied on October 27:

"The German Government has taken cognizance of the answer of the President of the United States. The President is aware of the far-reaching changes that have been carried out and are being carried out in the German constitutional structure, and that peace negotiations are being conducted by a people's government in whose hands rests, both actually and constitutionally, the power to make the deciding conclusions. The military powers are also subject to it. The German Government now awaits proposals for an armistice which shall be the first step toward a just peace as the President has described it in his proclamation."[19]

These notes in their complete continuity, setting forth the proposed bases of peace, were immediately transmitted by the President to the Supreme War Council, and Germany was so notified in his note of October 28. They were turned over by Clemenceau to Marshal Foch, who, on October 25, summoned Petain, Haig and Pershing to Senlis, read the correspondence to them and asked their advice. On the 26th Foch handed the military terms of the armistice to Clemenceau at the Trianon Palace Hotel, the meeting place of the Supreme War Council in Versailles.

The representatives of the Entente Governments immediately convened there to consider the terms laid

[19]On October 28, Emperor William issued the following decree, endorsing the constitutional amendments promulgated by the Reichstag:

"Prepared for by a series of government acts, a new order comes into force which transfers the fundamental rights of the Kaiser's person to the people. Thus comes to a close a period which stands in honor before the eyes of future generations. Despite all struggle between invested authority and aspiring forces, it has rendered possible to our people that tremendous development which imperishably revealed itself in the wonderful achievements of this war."—(World Almanac 1919.)

before them and to come to a conclusion as to their acceptance or rejection; to decide whether an armistice should be granted and peace made upon the basis offered, or the offer of an armistice refused and surrender demanded. They reached a conclusion on November 4, having occupied a period of nine days in deliberating upon the entire contract.

On the part of Great Britain there were present in these meetings Mr. Balfour, Prime Minister Lloyd George, the Foreign Minister, the Secretary of State for War, the First Lord of the Admiralty, the High Commissioner to the United States, (Lord Reading), the Chief of the General Staff (Wilson), Field Marshal Haig, the First Sea Lord Admiral Wemyss, and Mr. Bonar Law. Foreign Minister Pichon, Clemenceau and most of the members of the French Government were present.

Colonel House and General Bliss represented the United States, and with them were Mr. Joseph Grew, Mr. Gordon Auchincloss, and Admiral Benson. In all about twenty-four delegates actively participated.

The conclusions reached on November 4 were embodied in the following statement:

"The allied governments have given careful consideration to the correspondence which has passed between the President of the United States and the German Government. Subject to the qualifications which follow they declare their willingness to make peace with the Government of Germany on the terms of peace laid down in the President's address to Congress of January, 1918, and the principles of settlement enunciated in his subsequent addresses.

"They must point out, however, that clause 2, relating to what is usually described as the freedom of the seas, is open to various interpretations, some of which they could not accept. They must therefore reserve to themselves complete freedom on this subject when they enter the peace conference.

"Further, in the conditions of peace laid down in his address to Congress of January 8, 1918, the President declared that invaded territories must be restored as well as evacuated and freed. The allies feel that no doubt ought to exist as to what this provision implies. By it they understand that compensation will be made by Germany for all damage done to the civilian population of the allies and their property by the aggression of Germany by land, by sea, and from the air."

The American Government acquiesced in these amendments of the allies and they were communicated to the German Chancellor on November 5, with the information that Marshal Foch had been authorized to receive properly accredited representatives of the German Government and to communicate to them the terms of an armistice.

The German Armistice Commission, headed by Mathias Erzberger, and including Count Oberndorff, left Berlin on November 6, crossed the front by the Chimay-LaChapelle-Guise road on November 7, and on the morning of the 8th were conducted to the headquarters of Marshal Foch in his private car in the Forest of Compiegne.

Here the armistice terms were handed them. The German delegates protested against the severity of the terms, and by agreement a messenger was sent to Spa for instructions. The messenger had some difficulty in

crossing the line, but before his return authorization received by wireless on the 10th directed acceptance of the armistice.

Positive information of the abdication of the Kaiser was received at Marshal Foch's headquarters on November 9th, while the armistice negotiations were proceeding: on the 10th the Kaiser crossed the frontier and took political asylum in Holland. The paramount American war aim was thus met before the armistice was signed.

Of the two clauses which the Supreme War Council appended to their acceptance of the American terms of peace, the first, concerning the freedom of the seas bore more directly upon relations to be settled among the associated governments than between them and Germany. The second, providing for compensation to be made by Germany for damage done to the civilian populations was declaratory of principles included in the Wilson proposals and was merely redundant. It accomplished perfectly what was at the time in the minds of the signers, complete definition of the extent of liability which Germany was to assume. It also fixed with equal precision and clearness a limit beyond which the imposition of indemnities could not go. It estopped the signers from putting forth any claim of right to other compensation, indemnities or punitive damages. What was afterwards described as a peace of victory could not now be made without repudiation of the signatures of the allied governments.

When the Supreme War Council were deliberating

upon this decision around the green table in the Trianon Palace Hotel they had before them these facts:

All of Germany's allies had collapsed. The news of the armistice with Turkey had just reached them, that of the Austro-Hungarian defeat was fresh; the Bulgarian collapse was known.

These facts would seem to have recommended to them the refusal of a compromise peace with Germany, and the prosecution of the war to a military victory and an unconditional surrender.

On the other hand the allied offensive was being prosecuted at enormous cost of life and resources. The resistance was stubborn. The attrition on the reserves was great.[20] The service of supply was disordered. Communications were growing difficult. The German line was intact. The military advisers of the Supreme Allied Council recommended acceptance of the terms.

The allied statesmen and the allied populations had emerged but three short months before from the deepest depression of the war. The memory of the peril of the previous summer was still heavy. The populations were weary to exhaustion of the struggle. Nerves were at the snapping point. Further hostilities and further hazards were unwelcome.

There was another consideration which could not have been absent from the minds of some of the negotiators: Their own resources were completely exhausted; they were continuing the struggle with money

[20] "October 13. The remembrance that Haig had put in his two last fresh divisions on the eighth, forbids me to oppose the armistice." Colonel Repington's diary.

borrowed from, and with supplies furnished by the United States, and would soon be hopelessly in debt to the western Republic. If the war continued many months longer not even the fruits to be gained from complete victory over Germany would enable them to cancel any but a small part of these obligations.

Some of these considerations must have recommended to the allied statesmen the acceptance of the Wilson peace.

The reaction in the Entente countries to the German Chancellor's proposal of October 4 for an armistice was unfavorable. The London Times on October 8 said:

"The French and American press are uncompromising in their opposition to seeking peace with Germany under present conditions. The American press declares that the only alternative for the Central Powers is unconditional surrender or war to the limit. Allied opinion on the Continent is in full sympathy with this view."

As the interchange of notes progressed, however, English comment became more favorable, and endorsement of the President's utterances was general. For a time the London Times seemed inclined to ascribe astute Machiavellian policies to Mr. Wilson. "The democratic fiction," and "Mr. Wilson's political offensive" were phrases which it used in discussing President Wilson's note to Austria. It explained his motives in communicating with Germany as follows:

"It was felt that an announcement of war a l'outrance, such as had been made to Austria, or a demand for unconditional surrender such as had brought Bulgaria to heel, would pull

the German nation and Government together and substitute a defensive morale for the previous lust for power and conquest. Hence the American answer of October 8 to Prince Maximilian's whine of October 5 with its apparent loop-hole for peace."

Under a headline of October 15 "Democracy or Surrender", the Times said:

"The President was playing a deliberate game with Germany, trying to lead her Government on to admit fear of defeat and her people to see that the most comfortable way of meeting defeat would be to help the allies to eliminate Prussianism."

On October 16 the Times said:

"Mr. Wilson's prompt and emphatic reply has been received with general satisfaction in political and diplomatic circles.

"Opinion was less unanimous upon President Wilson's reference to a radical change in the character of the government of Germany as 'one of the terms of peace which the German Government has now accepted.' But in some competent quarters the view prevails that the President's position hardly differs from that taken up by Mr. Lloyd George when he declared that the allies would naturally deal with a repentent Germany in a different spirit from that which would inspire their treatment of an unrepentant Germany."

The inclination noticeable at the beginning to ascribe astute and subtle motives to the President in his dealings with Germany quickly passed out of the editorial expressions in the European press, and every evidence indicates that the European Governments themselves regarded them as sincere utterances which meant exactly what they said.

When the President submitted his correspondence with Germany to the Supreme War Council, the Ameri-

can Government brought no pressure to bear upon that body either for acceptance or rejection of the armistice. They were fully aware, however, that the United States would not desert them if they determined to prosecute the war to a military conclusion. While the deliberations were in progress at the Trianon Palace Hotel the Washington correspondent of the London Times wrote:

"American opinion is thoroughly satisfied that the center of gravity of war policy should be shifted to Versailles. It is prepared to accept whatever Versailles may decide."

The armistice with Austria was signed on November 5, after separate negotiations, and developments there are not a necessary part of the present discussion.

There are certain observations which may now be made concerning the circumstances under which hostilities with Germany came to an end.

An analysis of the October notes and the disavowal of any purpose of imposing a punitive peace in the clarifying provisions in the agreement of November 4 at the Trianon Palace Hotel disclose an unmistakable intent on the part of all parties to close hostilities on the basis of the peace proposed by President Wilson.

Other motives than those which actuated the deliberations at Versailles, as we shall see, very quickly modified the councils of the European statesmen. The mental processes which began to actuate their conduct immediately after Germany's acceptance of the armistice varied widely from those which impelled them to their decisions while hostilities were still in progress.

In fact, the signatures were no sooner dry upon the

pact entered into at the Trianon Palace Hotel, and the cessation of hostilities assured, than they prepared to repudiate its contents as soon as Germany was disarmed. The true agreement was kept secret, and the public in each Entente country was given to understand that complete victory had been won and surrender compelled. So sedulously did the Entente Governments disseminate the belief in an overwhelming military victory that the legend is generally current today that the war ended in an unconditional surrender on the part of Germany.

But the facts do not support this thesis.

General Pershing's report of operations appears to be based upon considerations of conditions in the field only. Its closing paragraphs tell of the flanking movement by the American troops which culminated on November 5 in a threat to the main railway artery of German retreat, whereupon the Germans on November 6 sued for an armistice.

The strategic situation did not, in fact, compel the request for an armistice. The series of wireless interchanges between Berlin and Washington, involving chiefly political demands, begun on October 5 and ending in agreement on November 5, brought the armistice about. It was initiated the next day. It might probably be said with truth that if these wireless interchanges had resulted in agreement on October 10, or 15 or 20, the armistice would have followed them immediately.

There was no military decision on the western front. There was no military surrender. The agreement that

ended hostilities called for a negotiated peace, and in terms waived demand for surrender (Wilson note of October 23). The German delegation that signed the armistice was headed by a civilian, Mathias Erzberger.

The manner in which the war on the western front closed, therefore, contrasts strongly with its conclusion on the other fronts. The Bulgarian line of defense crumpled and melted away leaving the civilian populations in its rear unprotected; the Turkish armistice followed the rapid surrender to Allenby of one Turkish army after another; and the retreat of the Austro-Hungarian army before the Italians at Vittorio Veneto was a headlong flight after which its officers did not even attempt to reassemble its units.

The German front on November 11 remained unbroken, the retreat had been orderly, the soldiers' morale remained intact. There was no decision in the field. If a political settlement had not been reached; if negotiations for peace had not profoundly influenced strategic policy; and if the conclusion of the war had been referred solely to a military decision, an armistice would not have been signed on November 11, nor is there valid evidence as to when it could have been forced by the necessity of military surrender. On the other hand, if we sweep away the propaganda which was subsequently put forth for the purpose of obscuring the closing scenes of the war, we find that there was no expectation in the mind of the Supreme War Council that the German line could be broken at an early date.[21]

The French press accounts of the last three days fighting are colored and exaggerated but, with all the will in the world, are unable to picture a scene of military rout. On November 9 Le Temps says; "On all fronts the Germans, conquered, fight while retreating; in a word the Germans are conquered, definitely conquered. What matters the front still held by their soldiers! It only remains for them to lay down (poser) their arms and to submit to the conditions that will be imposed upon them." "The pursuit continues on all fronts. The British armies throw back (refoulent) the enemy on Mons and Maubeuge. Ours throw them back (les rejettent) on Herson, Mezieres and Sedan. The Americans with the same vigor clear the Germans

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[21]The strategic situation on October 8 was set forth by the War Correspondent of the London Times as follows:

"In saying all this it is necessary once more to guard against misinterpretation. The Germans are fighting now with the energy of desperation, and it must not be supposed that they will not be equally dangerous adversaries on the defensive as they were on the offensive.

"The situation is exceedingly favorable to us, but it is not yet decided in our favor, and in rejecting the German peace offer we must not delude ourselves into thinking that the rest of the war will be all beer and skittles.

"On the contrary there will be terrible fighting. Still, the fact that the Germans, who began the war, have now made peace a part of their war policy, should encourage us to make war a part of our peace policy."

On the same day Mr. Winston Churchill, Minister of Munitions, speaking at Glasgow, urged continued effort on the part of the workers:

"Having regard," he said, "to the time that must elapse before the winter weather comes in France and Flanders, I cannot feel that we have any right to count upon an immediate decision of a final character there. Whatever may be the course of the war in

from the two banks of the Meuse. The allied soldiers and ours do not encounter very great resistance."

The British communiques are more restrained and nearer the point. On November 8 we find "battles somewhat violent, sharp fighting, stubborn resistance;" on November 9, "In the course of the afternoon the resistance of the enemy is sensibly increased and we have encountered considerable opposition of mitrailleuse in certain sectors of the front; some prisoners and some cannon taken." On November 8 the Americans encounter "violent combats, obstinate resistance."

The communiques of November 10, the last day

1918, the year 1919 will see our foe unable to resist our legitimate and rightful claims."

Colonel Repington also states that best informed authorities agreed that a military decision could not be expected before April, 1919.

On November 5 the London Times said editorially:

"It may be doubted whether even now the public generally realizes the extreme difficulty and obstinacy of the fighting. Far too much is being taken for granted here in these victories, and the severity of the strain on the endurance especially of the British armies, who have been in the hottest of the fighting since July 1916, has not been fully appreciated in this country. People have tended to think that because the Germans were retreating the battles have all been in the nature of rear-guard actions, and that their result was a foregone conclusion. That view is very unjust to the troops engaged and especially to the British army.

"If the German army had been allowed to carry out its retreat 'according to plan' the result would have been to place it in a stronger position than ever. Supposing that they had extricated themselves from France and Flanders without suffering heavy losses, that they had established themselves at their convenience on a shorter line along the Meuse, and that they had then launched their 'peace offensive' with resources undiminished and with all the prestige of an easy and scatheless retreat, the situation now both military and political might well have been one of intense difficulty."

upon which official reports of the fighting were issued, were of this tenor: "Pursuing the rear guards of the enemy which, at certain points, have put up strong resistance, notably in the center and right. Our troops have largely progressed in the course of the day on the entire front." (French communique.) On the British front; "Increased resistance." On the American front; "Local operations by First and Second Armies give considerable gain on a number of points between the Meuse and Moselle. In the Woevre, "Obstinate resistance of machine-guns and heavy artillery."

In the face of the character of the official communiques the voluminous and reiterated claims subsequently made of overwhelming military victory on the western front, especially the assertion of a military surrender, become mere froth for public consumption.

The German Kaiser did not flee ignominiously to save himself as did Darius at Arbela. The paramount American war aim and condition of an armistice was the Kaiser's abdication, and the establishment of a government responsive to the people (a condition precedent to the cessation of hostilities). The German Imperial authorities voluntarily yielded power to representatives of the people, in order to meet the American President's demand and thereby save the German state—in order to close the war on terms far more favorable to the future welfare of the German nation than could be hoped for if the war were to be prosecuted to a military conclusion involving ultimate surrender.

Under the circumstances, motives of pure patriotism

would have recommended to the Kaiser acquiescence in the demand for his abdication. Wilhelm II may not in fact have been actuated by these motives, but the fact that he abdicated on November 9, and took political asylum in Holland on November 10, is not in itself evidence of cowardice or an unworthy course of conduct. The Kaiser's person was never in danger of capture by the enemy.

The change of government from autocracy to republic in Germany was not a spontaneous development from internal political conditions. It was not forced by the popular will. It was effected by agreement of the leaders of all responsible parties to meet the condition precedent to an armistice made by President Wilson. The German revolution, so-called, did not precede, but followed the change in government. It consisted of violent efforts by a minority Bolshevist element to seize the instrumentalities of a government suddenly and extraordinarily changed as a result of pressure from without. Although favored by those conditions which the pressure of hunger throughout a population produces, it was unable to prevent the rapid organization of a stable democratic government and never succeeded in dominating the German working classes.

The armistice instrument of November 11 contained 35 articles and was extremely severe in its provisions. The German delegates bitterly protested against some of its terms as going beyond the scope of measures necessary to insure disarmament, and the German Chancellor immediately addressed a communi-

cation to the American Secretary of State urging that President Wilson intervene to mitigate the fearful conditions which would supervene under it in Germany.

A note to the American State Department had already been dispatched by the German Government, representing the urgent need for systematic food relief in Germany, which was replied to by the American Government on November 12. The American reply is set forth in the following chapter. This note was the only direct official communication that passed between the two governments for seven months, or until the occasion of the signing of the Treaty of Versailles in June, 1919, except that which immediately followed to Foreign Minister Erzberger on the subject of the armistice. The note of the State Department declined Erzberger's plea for intervention to mitigate the severity of the armistice terms, refusing to receive any communications which were not addressed to all the associated governments. The channel of communication with the associated governments was to be exclusively through the Armistice Commission.

The action of the American State Department in refusing to hold separate communications with the German Government was based upon the continuing necessity for unity of action on the part of the associated governments, and especially upon the need of supporting the Armistice Commission during the immediately succeeding weeks in its work of guaranteeing the effectual disarmament of Germany in a military sense. A divergence in attitude or purpose between the United States on the one hand and the Entente

Governments on the other would be dangerous, and the appearance of it was especially to be avoided in the early days of the armistice status.

On the other hand, inasmuch as the United States Government had been the spokesman for the Entente Governments in the negotiations which led to the cessation of hostilities, and for nearly a year in the framing of peace issues, it was natural that the German Government should look to the American Government for indications of the line of action which the making of the peace would take.

Having adopted the Armistice Commission as the only channel through which it would permit Germany to send its communications, the United States Government, if it proposed to take the lead in the common policy which the associated governments were to follow, must establish for itself a dominating influence in the deliberations of the Supreme War Council, to which body alone the Armistice Commission was amenable and to whose directions alone it owed obedience.

To recapitulate:

The peace negotiations begun in October, accepted by the Allies at the Trianon Hotel on November 4, and by Germany on November 5, were a complete agreement between the civil heads of state, settling definite bases of peace; and when the minds of the negotiators had met hostilities in the field were ordered stopped by mutual agreement by civilian intervention before a military decision was reached.

For the allies to continue the war meant many months of frightful slaughter and hopeless national

bankruptcy. It is only stating the inexorable logic of the situation to say that the compromise peace agreed to at the Trianon Palace Hotel was the price which the allies were willing to pay for the early cessation of hostilities. At that time none of the consequences to a defeated power which follow unconditional surrender in the field could be contemplated by an honest observer as applicable.

The entire peace negotiations with Germany have been here set forth. Briefly stated the agreement, which we may call the American Peace, was as follows:

1. Terms to be carried out before the armistice.
    a. Abdication of the Kaiser and his House.
    b. Relinquishment of vested power to the people.
2. Alsace-Lorraine to be ceded to France.
3. Lands indisputably Polish to be ceded to Poland; Poland to have outlet at Danzig.
4. German colonies to be considered in general settlement applicable to all colonial possessions.
5. Compensation to civilians injured by aggressions by Germany by sea, land and air; no punitive damages.
6. A peace settlement by negotiation.
7. A league of democratic nations including Germany.

CHAPTER III.

The Entente Peace.

IN America the war momentum ended with the armistice. War stimuli ceased to operate. Everyone sought to adjust himself again to the half-forgotten habits of the pre-war days. President Wilson at once became the central figure on the international stage. In Europe and America he was expected to give direction to the war settlement.

But in the Congressional election just held he had failed to receive the support of the electorate, and a Republican majority had been returned to Congress.

It is difficult to analyse the reasons which actuated the casting of the vote. Internal politics were much involved. Organized labor had become very powerful under the Wilson regime, and radical doctrines had been allowed much latitude of expression.

As to the Administration's conduct of the war, the President had formulated new war aims after the United States became a belligerent. That the casus belli had arisen under the principle of the freedom of the seas was almost forgotten. The new war aims seemed to involve the United States in a policy which undertook to extend the principles of democratic government as understood in America to governments in the Eastern Hemisphere. It brought the traditional policy of isolation into question.

Confronted with so many novel issues, the conserva-

tive instincts of the people were aroused and translated themselves into action at the polls.

On November 11 the President addressed Congress in person, and communicated to it the terms of the armistice instrument. He did not make the wireless notes of October and November a part of his communication, which would more fully have enlightened the Congress and the people as to the character of the peace settlement.

It does not seem probable that this omission was the result of any deliberate purpose or policy held at that time. The notes had been published, and if anyone chose to assemble them the character of the peace could be determined from them.

Upon receipt at the White House of the cabled message announcing the armistice and setting forth its terms, the President hastened to prepare a speech before a joint session, and to communicate the information to Congress at the earliest possible moment. In its hasty preparation the importance of again directing attention to the entire correspondence was overlooked.

It was, however, an omission which resulted in obscuring the judgment of American public opinion, which was sure to have far-reaching consequences, and which enhanced enormously the difficulties which President Wilson was to encounter later.

Quite plainly the absence in his address of any reference to the Trianon Hotel settlement was not the result of a motive similar to that of the European chancelleries, who deliberately intended to mislead the public in order to secure their support for a peace of vengeance.

The fact that Mr. Wilson in his address announced a purpose of granting immediate and extensive food relief, and of assistance to the German people in their efforts towards reconstruction, is sufficient evidence that on November 12 he had no desire to conceal from the American people the character of the real peace settlement.

In his address the President announced the ending of the war, and the triumphant overthrow of the principle of autocracy. This great thing having been accomplished, he made it plain that a policy of goodwill and aid to the German people under their new democratic regime would follow if they would accept the aid.

The first manifestation of this friendly attitude, he explained, was a comprehensive plan for food relief, in which the allied governments had signified their purpose to join, to be carried out in the same systematic manner in which the relief of Belgium had been organized.

The concluding paragraphs of this address were as follows:

"The humane temper and intentions of the victorious governments have already been manifested in a very practical way. Their representatives in the Supreme Council at Versailles have by unanimous resolution assured the people of the Central Empires that everything that is possible in the circumstances will be done to supply them with food and relieve the distressing want that is, in so many places, threatening their very lives; and steps are to be taken immediately to organize these efforts at relief in the same systematic manner that they were organized in the case of Belgium.

"By the use of the idle tonnage of the Central Empires, it ought presently to be possible to lift the fear of utter misery from their oppressed populations, and to set their minds and energies free for the great and hazardous tasks of political reconstruction which now face them on every hand.

"Hunger does not breed reforms; it breeds madness and all the ugly distempers that make an ordered life impossible.

"They are now face to face with their initial test. We must hold the light steady until they find themselves.

"And in the meantime, if it is possible, we must establish a peace that will justly define their place among the nations, remove all fear of their neighbors, and of their former masters, and enable them to live in security and contentment when they have set their own affairs in order.

"I for one do not doubt their purpose or capacity. There are some happy signs that they know and will choose the way of self-control and peaceful accommodation. If they do, we shall put our aid at their disposal in every way we can. If they do not, we must await with patience and sympathy the awakening and recovery that will surely come at last."

The note to the German Government of November 12, to which reference has been made in the preceding chapter, and after the dispatch of which communication with the German Government was abruptly stopped by the State Department's notification to Erzberger that further communications must be had with the associated governments through the Armistice Commission, was as follows:

Department of State, Washington,
November 12, 1918.

Sir:

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your note of today transmitting to the President the text of a cable inquir-

ing whether this government is ready to send foodstuffs into Germany without delay, if public order is maintained in Germany and an equitable distribution of food is guaranteed.

I should be grateful if you would transmit the following reply to the German Government.

At a joint session of the two Houses of Congress on November 11, the President of the United States announced that the representatives of the Associated Governments in the Supreme War Council at Versailles have by unanimous resolution assured the peoples of the Central Empires that everything that is possible in the circumstances will be done to supply them with food, and relieve the distressing want that is in so many places threatening their very lives, and that steps are to be taken immediately to organize these efforts at relief in the same systematic manner that they were organized in the case of Belgium.

Furthermore, the President expressed the opinion that by the use of the idle tonnage of the Central Empires it might presently be possible to lift the fear of utter misery from their oppressed populations, and set their minds and energies free for the great and hazardous tasks of political reconstruction which now face them on every hand.

Accordingly the President now directs me to state that he is ready to consider favorably the supplying of foodstuffs to Germany and to take up the matter immediately with the allied governments, provided he can be assured that public order is being and will continue to be maintained in Germany, and that an equitable distribution of food can be clearly guaranteed.

Accept, Sir, the renewed assurance of my highest consideration.

ROBERT LANSING.

Mr. Hans Sulzer, Minister of Switzerland,
In charge of German Interests in the United States.

On November 29 an announcement from the White House named as delegates to the Peace Conference the President, himself, the Secretary of State Mr. Lansing, the Honorable Henry White, Mr. Edward M. House, and General Tasker H. Bliss. I do not know when the President took the determination to be present at the Peace Conference in Paris, but the decision was probably reached shortly after the dispatch of the note to Erzberger cutting off direct communication between the State Department and the German Government. Thereafter the President would have to delegate his entire peace-making authority to his plenipotentiaries in Paris or else be present in person to participate in the settlement.

The President again addressed a joint session of Congress on December 2, and communicated to it his intention of going to Paris for the purpose of discussing the main features of the treaty of peace. "The conclusion," he said, "that it was my paramount duty to go has been forced upon me by considerations which, I hope, will seem as conclusive to you as they have to me. The allied governments have accepted the bases of peace which I outlined to Congress on the 8th of January last,[22] as the Central Empires also have, and very reasonably desire my personal counsel in their interpretation and application, and it is highly desirable that I should give it in order that the sincere desire of our government to contribute, without selfish purpose

[22] "I owe it to them (our soldiers) to see to it, so far as in me lies, that no false or mistaken interpretation be put upon them, and no possible effort omitted to realize them."

of any kind, to settlements that will be of common benefit to all the nations concerned, may be made fully manifest."

The President sailed from New York on December 4 on the George Washington.

During the period when President Wilson was still in Washington (November 11 to December 4) there was not a day, as subsequent developments show, when vigilant observation of political developments in Europe was not necessary, and when the most accurate conclusions upon the political movements and the psychologic, economic and financial tendencies there should not have been at his disposal.

This was not properly appreciated by constituted government agencies on this side of the ocean. Intellectual tension everywhere had been relaxed, and these agencies which never had, in fact, been organized for such a purpose, remained blind to developments in Europe of most profound significance.

While on the high seas, from December 4 to December 13, the President, in spite of wireless communication, which was chiefly with the United States, was for all practical purposes isolated from the world.

During the entire period from November 11 to December 14 the sole source of confidential information of conditions in Europe which could come with any force to the President was Colonel House, his personal adviser, and General Bliss, his military adviser. The embassies in the Entente countries performed their duties in a perfunctory and routine manner, as all important negotiations were in the hands of the Presi-

dent's personal advisers. The character of the peace to which the President was committed was only half disclosed to the embassies, and they were not, therefore, carefully watching the attitude of the European ministries with reference to it.

The President's personal advisers presumably possessed copies of the October-November interchanges with the German Government, of his address to Congress of November 11, of his note to the German Government through the Swiss Charge on November 12; they were aware of the character of the peace agreement as consummated, and of the President's conception of its meaning. It was primarily their duty in Europe to interpret President Wilson's views without abatement of their significance, no matter if they encountered distinct divergence of opinion in the minds of the Europeans.

It was also their function to advise the President of any divergence which appeared to be of a serious character; and above all, if such divergence of view led, before the President's arrival, to political or other action inconsistent with the Wilson purposes, to interpose their protest, in order that the President afterwards might not be confronted with a series of faits-accomplis.

No more solemn vigil ever fell to the lot of men than to these agents in the thirty-three days following the armistice; and a function which would tax the highest and most complex faculties of which the human mind is capable devolved upon them. Consummate wisdom, moral courage and personal force were de-

manded. This vigil may have been maintained, and this function performed; in that case responsibility for consequences was not with them, but with the President.

They had permitted very drastic armistice terms to be imposed—terms which strained the spirit of the peace agreement. These terms, however, when carried out, secured the first essential—they made it impossible for Germany to renew hostilities, and did not in themselves preclude a final settlement in accordance with the Wilson agreement. They did, however, form an ideal basis for a peace of vengeance.

It is necessary now to scrutinize the situation in Europe, to observe the conduct and policies of the Entente statesmen, and to trace the significant developments from the day of the armistice until December 14, the day of Mr. Wilson's arrival at Paris when it would become possible for him to exert his personal influence upon the forces at work there.

The business of first importance after November 11 was the task of the military men in bringing about the disarmament of Germany within thirty days. This was in the hands of the permanent Armistice Commission, presided over by Marshal Foch, which was created by the armistice instrument of November 11. It took up its headquarters at Spa, and proceeded with military thoroughness and dispatch. A reading of the thirty-five articles of the armistice instrument will give some conception of the magnitude of its functions. Besides effectually removing all military equipment, it took enormous quantities of other property. It denuded the

German railways of their rolling stock and thereby brought normal communication almost to a standstill.

So energetically was the work performed that by December 10, the primary function for which the Armistice Commission was created had been performed. Germany was divested of weapons and military supplies of all kinds, a million allied soldiers lay along the Rhine and held the bridges, and Marshal Foch, himself, announced on that date that it was now impossible for Germany to renew hostilities.

The legal character and scope of the Armistice Commission were easily understood. They were fixed by the clauses in President Wilson's October notes relating to terms of armistice. The meeting of the minds of the parties on November 5 established a contractual relation, of which the scope of the Armistice Commission was a part.

The function of the Armistice Commission was to see to it that German disarmament was carried out to a point where the renewal of hostilities would be impossible, leaving the associated governments in a position to enforce the terms of peace already agreed upon. It would properly continue to function until a preliminary treaty of peace was signed, which treaty by new provisions would provide for any military sanctions which might be deemed necessary. This was its sole function.

It had no legal authority to negotiate, nor had the Supreme War Council authority to confer power of negotiation upon it, being bound by its agreement with

the German Government to make a negotiated peace between civilian plenipotentiaries.

The only contingency in which the Armistice Commission could legally carry on negotiations with the German Government would be in case of repudiation by that Government of its October-November agreement, and an attempted resistance by military force or treachery. In the absence of this eventuality the Armistice Commission could have no legal power to impose new terms, and after a brief exercise of power would cease to figure prominently in the process of settlement.

The Supreme Authority in Europe after November 11, 1918, in the absence of breach of faith by Germany, and the only body having authority to deal with Germany, was the Supreme Allied War Council which, under the war agreements of the governments not to make a separate peace, would hold power until a peace treaty with Germany was signed.

There were two divergent paths of statesmanship possible for the European leaders after the day of armistice: to adhere to the peace settlement proposed and agreed upon at the Trianon Palace Hotel (and already partly performed on the part of Germany,) or, when Germany was disarmed thirty days later, to repudiate the agreement and impose a peace of vengeance. (In later chapters some of the moral phases of European policy will be considered. In the present chapter I seek to set forth definite facts, which are concrete in their nature and are susceptible of being proved or disproved, and over which there can be but little dispute.)

The military disarmament of Germany (submitted

to as an evidence of good faith) was completed in less than a month. As a result the allies in December possessed the power, but not the right, to impose a different settlement upon Germany from that agreed to over the armistice signatures.

The state of mind during the lurid days of combat that recommended to the allied statesmen the acceptance of the proposed terms was succeeded, after the hostilities ceased, by one which contrasted strongly with it. Stock-taking and calculation began.

The appalling cost of the war, not only in lives but in treasure, was making itself manifest. A staggering burden of taxation and confiscation must be imposed by the governments upon the people if each nation was to pay its own war debts, creating an internal situation which heads of government and ministries shrank from facing.

There was, I believe, a spiritual exaltation for many weeks following the cessation of hostilities, which permeated the masses in all the nations engaged in the war, and was probably a reaction to the fact that its horrors had ceased. A quick preliminary peace of moderation made during this period would have been approved, and the ministries that were responsible for it would have been sustained. On a plain question of right and wrong public opinion is always on the side of moral integrity. It was in the power of the governments to inform the people frankly of their obligations under the terms agreed upon with Germany, and when these terms were understood by them there can be no doubt that the people, under the stimulating leadership

of President Wilson, would have made a prompt and favorable decision.

From the moment when hostilities ceased the figure of President Wilson grew day by day, in the minds of the people of the Continent of Europe, until his coming engrossed their thoughts almost to the exclusion of everything else.

If the question of a moderate peace with Germany had depended solely upon the masses in Europe, its advocacy by Mr. Wilson, upon his arrival on December 14, would have assured its consummation.

But in Europe public opinion is by no means as well informed as in the United States, nor does it exercise the same measure of control over public affairs. Indeed, it is a revelation to the American student of government to see how easily public opinion there may be swayed by governing groups, and how readily the governing groups avail themselves of the fact.

In December, 1918, it lay peculiarly within the power of the Supreme War Council and of the Chancellries to direct the course of the masses in their attitude toward the peace. A state of exaltation of spirit, making whole populations capable of an act of moral duty and dignity, is fugitive and ephemeral. While it is translating itself into action its leadership cannot falter or intermit its activity, or the cold, material motives of self-interest will resume their wonted sway.

President Wilson did not arrive in Europe until thirty-three days after hostilities ceased. All the forces there which had ranged themselves sincerely under American leadership were therefore marking time, for

the President's agents in Europe gave no visible sign that they were on guard.

In Europe, unlike the United States, there is an intimate connection between government and organized financial power, and the great financier is in daily contact with the great statesman. European systems of finance are strongly international in their character.

In France, when hostilities ceased the financiers were confronted with the appalling fact that all the stored-up wealth of France had been shot out of the cannon's mouth in four years of war. They were confronted with the neccessity of revealing this fact to the French people and to the world, or of devising some presentable façade indicating solvency, which would conceal the ruins behind it and give time to devise some means of recoupment.

There was no way to make both ends meet. They might be made to seem to meet if the allied and associated governments could enter a credit of billions upon their books by forcing Germany to undertake the payment of an immense annual tribute for a long period of years.[23]

In France the spirit of vengeance could be easily stirred—the war had been peculiarly a war of peoples, not as in the older days a war of governments. Ger-

[23]The estimates of German pre-war wealth made by the agents of the Supreme War Council indicate that the total of what the allied debts would amount to primarily influenced their conclusions as to the total of German resources. They computed the value of Germany's forests, mines, lands and railway systems at ten billion dollars, her mineral deposits at nine and one-half billion dollars ;her tangible wealth, excluding minerals, at ninety billion dollars. Her annual

many by December 10 was disarmed and innocuous. There was nothing which stood between France and complete spoliation of the enemy except the moral restraint of the armistice terms.

If the armistice terms could be falsified, two desirable things could be accomplished, the sating of the vengeance of the French nation, and an effort toward the remotely possible rehabilitation of French pre-war finances through the imposition of immense indemnities.

The French public had been permitted to believe that there were no strings to the victory.[24] Not only was the public allowed to believe it but the Government took every necessary measure to assure the confirmation of that belief. The French semi-official press under-

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national income was ten billion dollars. She possessed more than half the coal in Europe.

The total war expenditure of the allies was estimated at a hundred and twenty-five billion dollars which was stated to be less than one-seventh of the German assets in sight.

That practical statesmen in the last weeks of the war were finding some time to look into the future and consider it is not to be doubted. Bonar Law, in a speech at the Guild Hall on September 30, 1918, (which a discerning mind might classify as a reply to President Wilson's address of September 27) said:

"After the war what will happen to the industrial position of this country and our allies will depend upon our credit, and the credit will depend on the war ending in the way that we intend it shall end." (Cheers.)

[24]The Municipality of Paris issued the following proclamation announcing the armistice:

"People of Paris! It is victory, triumphant victory on all fronts. The enemy, vanquished, has laid down his arms and blood will cease to flow. Let Paris depart from her proud reserve which has won for her the admiration of the world. Let us give free course to our

took to interpret the meaning of President Wilson's October notes, reading into them a meaning which they did not contain, and taking a position which tended to nullify the decisions reached on November 4 at the Trianon Palace Hotel. (These press utterances were only a few of the political phenomena in Europe which should have put every agency of the American Government instantly on guard.)

Such an utterance was that of the Temps on November 8:

". . . At the same time he (President Wilson) signified to Germany that he subscribed to the second observation of the allies, that which implies the payment of all damages (la compensation totale des dommages). It is the accomplishment of the word which Clemenceau pronounced the 17th of September, "Le plus terrible compte de peuple a peuple s'est ouvert. Il sera payé" (The most terrible accounting owed by one people to another has been opened. It will be paid.)

By the end of November the tone of the French press was vindictive. From the day of the armistice its repudiation of the Trianon Hotel pact was unmistakable. This thought in the editorial columns of the Temps is plainly fathered by the wish:

"When the conditions of armistice were signed at Versailles the allies and the United States had before them a Germany

joy and enthusiasm and let us swallow our tears. As testimony to our great soldiers and our incomparable chiefs, let us beflag all houses with the French colors and the colors of our dear allies. Our dead may sleep in peace. The sublime sacrifice made by them of their lives for the future of the race and the salvation of La Patrie shall not be barren. For them as for us Le jour de Gloire est arrivé. Vive la Republique! Vive la France Immortelle!"

which they knew—a Germany coherent, where discipline reigned, and where the different powers, civil and military, had clearly fixed relations. Now we are before a Germany which we do not know, and which does not know itself. Nobody knows what will happen. One cannot forget Russia."

On November 30 the Temps frowned upon the proposed purpose of the Germans to convoke a national assembly for the adoption of a constitution, and demanded a peace settlement before such action was taken, ending its editorial with the words "La paix d'abord!". On the 24th of November this journal opposed the plea of the German Government that food be permitted to enter because starvation threatened to precipitate bolshevism, insisting that Germany, prosecuting a war of aggression, had not hesitated to participate bolshevism in Russia. In early December it commented with enthusiasm on the position taken by Lloyd George when he said "A just peace, severely just, pitilessly just; it is necessary that Germany pay the costs of the war to the limit of her capacity."

In view of the relationship which the French press sustains to the Government, there could be no possible difficulty at this time in understanding the minds of the French statesmen. The French Government repudiated the Trianon Hotel pact almost as soon as the ink was dry on the signatures, and at the same time the French public was led to believe that no trace whatever of obligation inhered in it. That the French official mind was not running with that of the President was manifest as early as October 25, when Le Temps undertook to interpret the meaning of the President's note of

October 23 to the German Government. It said editorially:

"A surrender (capitulation!) That is the term. Like Mr. Wilson we think there is no advantage in not using it publicly. Surrender of Germany! This leaves no place for misunderstanding among the allies. Surrender of Germany! This teaches the Germans what the Hindenburgs and Ludendorffs have cost them, their incorrigible leaders, their Hohenzollern Dynasty . . The problem is purely military—that Germany solicits an armistice."

There appears to have been entire unanimity in the Supreme War Council in the determination to repudiate the Trianon Hotel agreement. Marshal Foch did not hesitate to make the choice. The decision was easy for Clemenceau and for Louis Klotz and the French financiers.

Italy, desperately poor before the war began, was in a like case with France. It had been the expectation in Italy throughout the war that victory would ameliorate the poverty of the people, and her statesmen could not bring themselves to contemplate a barren victory. They took the French point of view.

The British Ministry acquiesced. Great Britain was not so desperately depleted financially as her allies, and might weather her way through reconstruction without tribute from Germany, but if her Continental allies were determined upon the hard peace, Britain would not stand in their way. Moreover she could find use for her share of the money.

Many and intimate conferences of the greatest importance between the allied statesmen, almost from the

day of the armistice, must have been in progress, at which neither Colonel House, General Bliss nor the American Ambassadors were present, and of the significance of which they were not informed. (It is to be noted that no American Ambassador was en poste at the Court of St. James at this time, a newly appointed Ambassador accompanying President Wilson to Europe, and that the American Ambassador at Paris resigned his post in the early days of the Peace Conference.)

On December first a meeting of the Supreme War Council was held in London, which was participated in by Marshal Foch, Premier Clemenceau of France, Premier Orlando and Foreign Minister Sonnino of Italy. Others present from the Continent were Cambon, General Mordaque, General Weygand, Marquis Imperiali; other Englishment were Lord Curzon, Lord Reading, Mr. Balfour, Sir Erric Geddes, Lord Milner, Sir Henry Wilson, Mr. Bonar Law, General Smuts. The foreigners were welcomed by Prime Minister Lloyd George and the Duke of Connaught.

There were no American representatives present.

It is not necessary to enter the realms of conjecture to determine the subjects of discussion and the policies adopted.

The conspirators, as without much exaggeration we may now call them, were in this position:

1. They were mutually agreed and determined to impose a peace of vengeance upon Germany (which would destroy that state as a rival, and place its people

under an industrial bondage which might save their own treasuries from bankruptcy.)

2. Entente opinion already believed that a military victory had been won over the German army, and had compelled its surrender. By permitting this belief to harden into conviction, the support of public opinion in Entente Europe could be counted on.

3. But the peace of vengeance was morally indefensible, being a repudiation of a contractual obligation to the enemy, and involving the entire demolition of the Wilson peace settlement. A break with the United States could not be thought of. Therefore the American negotiators must be made to shift their ground, and their acquiescence must be secured by the arts of persuasion, not excluding those of duplicity and mendacity if necessary. To accomplish this, time would be needed, and a policy of delay, and if necessary of obstruction in the proceedings, recommended itself to them.

4. Assuming unity of purpose among the associated governments to be secured:

Tenacious opposition to agreements offered must be expected from Germany, whose government would seek to stand upon the Trianon Hotel pact. The opposition of Germany, now disarmed, would have to take the form of moral resistance only. This moral and passive resistance, based upon a conviction of the justice of her position, would be stubborn. It would yield only to unremitting pressure. The means of such pressure were the Armistice Commission having behind it the army on the Rhine, and the Naval Blockade.

These agencies would rigidly prevent food from entering Germany. The pressure of starvation would grow progressively greater from day to day, and the power of resistance to allied demands would gradually weaken, until acquiescence was secured. Here time again was of the essence.

There would be no direct communication with the German Government by the civilian delegates at Paris until the moment for the signing of the peace. All dealings would have the form of military measures. At Paris, philosophic discussion on the subject of the league of nations, and numberless territorial disputes and points of clashing interest, would afford occupation for delegates and staffs.

The Europeans had the advantage of thirty-three days before Mr. Wilson's arrival, to put this plan in operation.

(As to whether the United States, which had taken the lead in bringing about a peace which limited the right to impose indemnities, could be persuaded to acquiese in the hard peace, the Europeans could have had no definite information at that time. Their concerted plans indicated that they believed it in their power to bring this about. Their belief in this respect was probably strengthened by an inference which they drew that the American election of November 5, being a repudiation of the leadership of President Wilson, was also a repudiation of the peace of moderation.

The elections of November 5, however, cannot be accepted as a judgment of the American people on the character of the peace agreement actually imposed on

Germany, as the acceptance of the Wilson proposals given by the allies on November 4 at the Trianon Palace Hotel was not yet known to them. The demand of the Republicans that the war be prosecuted until German surrender was compelled, and that severe penalties be imposed, were made while the fighting was still in progress, before the allies had accepted the Wilson terms, and while they had the right to demand whatever terms they could compel in the field.

The Europeans, however, were convinced that the Republican party demanded a peace of victory, and the Republican victory at the polls no doubt strengthened their confidence that the American people would not support Mr. Wilson's peace settlement.)[25]

The character of the considerations which occupied the minds of the members and coadjutors of the Supreme War Council, and of the conclusions reached, in its meetings in London during the first three days of December, reveal themselves sufficiently in three events of basic importance which took place before President Wilson's arrival in Europe, and which mark the fact that Europe had determined to part company with President Wilson and with adherents of the Wilson peace.

The first of these faits-accomplis, as we may call

[25]In this connection the following entry in Colonel Repington's diary is interesting:

"Nov. 7. I am amused to hear that the F. O. has not been made officially cognizant of the armistice terms. It is thought by wise folk that the Republican majority in the Congressional elections will make our ministers statesmen, because they will no longer fear Wilson. The said wise folk regard the Republican majority as a God-send."

them because of their bearing upon President Wilson's purposes, an event whose significance appeared to escape the scrutiny of all the agencies of the American Government at the time, was the British General Elections held December 14, and for which December 4 was nomination day. (The indications are that the decision to hold general elections on the issue of a hard peace was made in late November, after consultation with the Continental statesmen.)

During the war, politics had been adjourned in England, and the majority which, throughout, sustained the government in the House of Commons, was the result of a coalition of liberals and unionists which generally had the support of labor.

When the armistice brought hostilities to a close on November 11, with a necessary peace settlement following close upon it, it would have seemed that that settlement would logically be made under the existing coalition ministry which had conducted the war, as presumably the settlement did not involve domestic politics, and presented no issue to divide the electorate. But the Ministry wanted a new mandate. Having determined upon a certain peace policy, it wanted to commit the people to it.

The manner in which hostilities ended was not clearly known in England. The notes exchanged in October and November had been published in the newspapers, but had quickly disappeared from the printed page, and were mere disjecta membra of the agreement. Government did not enlarge upon their meaning.

The newspapers in the days preceding the armistice

had been full of hopes of victory, and of demands that the fighting should be pushed to the point of surrender. It was easy for the average Englishman to believe, when the news of the armistice came, that the victory was an unqualified one.

When government did not officially intimate that the victory was a limited one, the conviction became general within a few days that surrender had been compelled.

The conclusion cannot be escaped that the Lloyd George Ministry deliberately permitted the English people to be deceived, and that the Ministry itself was guilty of positive deception.

On November 6 Lloyd George, with all the manner of one announcing complete victory, stated in the Commons that the allies had sent their conclusions to President Wilson, and that Marshal Foch had been authorized to communicate to German plenipotentiaries the terms of an armistice. The impression which Mr. Lloyd George's words conveyed is disclosed by the London Times' report of his statement.

"It was significant that the loudest and longest cheers which greeted any part of the Prime Minister's statement were given to the declaration that the Germans must apply to Marshal Foch. The implication of the phrase 'in the usual military form' was plain".

Mr. Lloyd George was disingenuous here in two respects:

1st. He did not tell the Commons that the "conclusions" of the Supreme War Council, reached November 4 at the Trianon Palace Hotel, were conclusions to accept a peace without punitive damages.

2d. His phrase "in the usual military form" misrepresented the fact. We have seen that the German Government sent a civilian delegation to sign a peace agreement already formulated, and whose terms Marshal Foch had no authority to alter.[26]

The significance of the chronology here cannot be escaped: On November 4 the Trianon pact was signed, on November 5 President Wilson communicated it to the German Government and published it in America; on November 6 (the Trianon pact being as yet undisclosed in England) Lloyd George, appearing in the Commons and saying nothing about the Trianon pact, announced the military surrender of Germany, and proclaimed to the people of England an unqualified victory. The publication in England of Mr. Wilson's note to Germany, setting forth the Trianon pact was not made until November 7, when it appeared in the London Times. It could be printed then with impunity, for the psychological results which Lloyd George desired had been secured the preceding day.[27]

Not a word of public discussion thereafter emanated from the British Government as to the significance of the Trianon Hotel transactions. The conclusion fol-

[26]President Wilson's final note to Germany on November 5 said: "Marshal Foch has been authorized by the Government of the United States and the Allied Governments to receive properly accredited representatives of the German Government and to communicate to them the terms of an armistice."

[27]That three days after the Trianon Hotel pact was signed the Foreign Office had not been informed of it seems incredible, but see entry in Colonel Repington's diary November 7, 1918.

lowed that the Government regarded them as of no importance.

Lloyd George, speaking in the Guild Hall on the evening of November 9 (before the armistice was signed, but when the terms of agreement had been settled), said: "Germany is faced with immediate surrender or a worse fate. She has no other choice. Her doom is sealed."

Hence, within a fortnight after hostilities ended, the English people, led to that conclusion by their own statesmen, believed that Germany had surrendered unconditionally. The logical conclusion followed that in justice Germany should be made to pay heavily.

This was the state of mind that Mr. Lloyd George and the Ministry had manoeuvred with great skill to produce. It afforded an ideal issue upon which to go to the country, and upon which to perpetuate themselves in power. Furthermore the entire English people would be involved in the moral position of the Government, and in its defense if its moral position should be questioned.

No time was lost in setting the election machinery in motion. A Royal Proclamation fixed nomination day as December 4. Under the law the election would fall on the 10th day after, or December 14.

The political stage having been thus prepared it was perfectly possible for Mr. Lloyd George to go upon the hustings and declare that Germany, having outraged the conscience of mankind, deserved condign punishment, and that if he and his supporters were returned to power in Parliament, Germany should be

made to pay to the last farthing, and the Kaiser and his abettors should be tried in allied civilian courts for their high crimes against society.

This he did. He assured the English people that a victory, prosecuted to unconditional surrender, had been won, and that their moral right to impose a peace of retributive justice was unquestionable. The return of a majority was, of course, assured. The Coalition won 471 seats out of 707.

Mr. Asquith, the liberal leader, alone of all the figures of commanding place in England, raised his voice in protest against the Government's policy. He protested against the holding of general elections before the peace was made. "Elections at this time", he said "are a blunder and a calamity—unjust, unnecessary, and mutilated, because of the absence of hundreds of thousands of electors from their homes". "If they were to ask him", he said "what were the issues of the election" he would say "it is whether the members you are going to return are bound or free."

He demanded "a clean peace"; he was against acceptance of any peace which would be "a prelude in disguise to continuance of war. An aggressive economic boycott, what was that but war under another name?" He was "in favor of exacting from wrong-doers to the uttermost farthing, but when we had got reparation we must have a clean slate, and seventy million people had to go on living a life of their own."

On December 11 Mr. Asquith was hissed at Cupar for intimating that the allies did not have the moral right to crush Germany. He concluded his campaign

on the 12th addressing eight meetings in the valley of the Eden at Falkland and Ladybank. Soldiers took an active part in heckling the speaker, and insinuations were thrown out that as Prime Minister during the war some of his measures had worked to the advantage of the Germans. At these meetings he was under police protection. Otherwise the election is described generally as "very slow, not much excitement, not much passion."

By the time election day arrived Mr. Asquith's voice was as a voice crying in the wilderness. Everywhere that Lloyd George went the audience (from whom he had concealed the vital truth) was favorable. The words of his final appeal, delivered the day before the elections were reported as follows.

"Now I come to the second question I mean to talk about, and that is indemnities, (cheers.) Who is to foot the bill? (A voice; 'Germany!') I am again going to talk to you quite frankly about this.

"By the jurisprudence of every civilized country in the world, in any lawsuit, the loser pays. It is not a question of vengeance; it is a question of justice. It means that the judge and the court have decided that one party is in the wrong. He has challenged judgment. By the law of every civilized country in the world the party who is guilty of the wrong pays the costs. (Cheers.)

"There is absolutely no doubt about the principle. What we hope for in future, in dealing between nations, the same principles shall be established as in dealing between individuals —the same principles of right and wrong."[28]

[28]The limitation upon allied right to reparations accepted at the Trianon Hotel may be restated here:

Lloyd George was not alone as an exponent of this new school of moral exegesis; Bonar Law, at Great Assembly Hall, Mile End, London, said on December 11:

"Then there was the question of making Germany pay. Here, again, they could not say what would be done at the Conference, but they could say what they would like to do, and what they had already recommended to the allies. "It was no good to say that Germany, who had wrought all this loss, must pay for it. The first thing was to find out what she could pay; and they had already proposed to their allies that an expert scientific commission, to examine into and determine what could be had, not without injury to Germany, for a country was responsible for its government, and must expiate them. (A voice; "It is not their fault.")

"He heard someone say that the German people were not responsible. He did not agree. Every nation must be responsible for its government. He hoped the lesson of the war would not be lost on the German people; but he agreed with what President Wilson said, that the German people had got to prove a change of heart before he took it for granted. (Cheers.)"

"The allied governments have given careful consideration to the correspondence which has passed between the President of the United States and the German Government. Subject to the qualifications which follow they declare their willingness to make peace with the Government of Germany on the terms of peace laid down, etc.

"Further, the President declared * * * that invaded territories must be restored as well as evacuated and freed.

"The allied governments feel that no doubt ought to exist as to what this provision implies. By it they understand that compensation will be made by Germany for all damage done to the civilian population of the allies and their property by the aggressions of Germany by land, by sea, and from the air."

The London Times, a ready disciple of the Government's philosophy, had helped to start the election campaign off on December 6 with the following:

"The Kaiser must be prosecuted for a crime which has sent millions of the best of our men in Europe to death and mutilation, and should be prosecuted in an international court."

"The allies have accepted the principle that the Central Powers must pay the cost of the war up to the limit of their capacity".

The Privy Council now possessed carte blanche from the English people to prosecute its foreign policy. At Paris it would not be hampered by domestic intransigeance.[29]

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[29]The disclosure of the result of the British elections was hailed with delight in France. The unrestrained enthusiasm of the semi-official Temps finds this expression on December 30:

"This is the happiest event that has taken place since the signing of the armistice. Like military valor, political courage has been recompensed."

Then the editorial goes on to say that Lloyd George, having determined to consult the country before undertaking to conclude the peace, the Government victory passes all expectations. "Asquith is echoué, Henderson, Ramsay McDonald and Snowden are defeated; it is a mass compact and a positive program. The editorial continues:

"It is a national program to make Germany pay, to take radical precautions toward her; at home to have an energetic government, to cultivate the soil intensively, to increase industrial production, to tax the rich, to scatter well-being, social reform, strength, prosperity. * * *

"The prestige of Lloyd George and the prestige of Great Britain come forth reinforced. * * * Under the influence of the British elections the peace will be better, and England gives to all the democracies of the world the salutary example 'equilibrium by movement.'"

A curious coincidence with reference to these elections is found in the fact that the campaign opened on December 4 and was over on December 14, and that it was on December 4 that President Wilson sailed from New York and on December 14 that he reached Paris.

The results of the elections were not announced in England until December 30. President Wilson was on that date a guest in Buckingham Palace.

The whole election process, then, took place while President Wilson was on the high seas; the issues had not been advertised, and were not known in America before the President sailed.

The President's purpose in going to Europe was to see to it that a peace of moderation was made. One element of strength which he conceived that he possessed was an influence over public opinion in the Entente countries, which might be used as a persuasive force, if necessary, in the negotiations in the Peace Conference. But in the short period of time during which President Wilson was on shipboard this strength was stripped from him. He could not now count on the support of English public opinion as against the Imperial policy of a hard peace, and he had had no opportunity to remonstrate. The fait-accompli of the British Elections was conceived in the councils of the Supreme War Council as one element of a larger plan. This larger plan, fast being put into operation, could have been checked and superseded only by strong and vigorous participation in these early deliberations of the Supreme War Council itself. Apparently it was un-

checked in any particular by American agencies in Europe before President Wilson's arrival there.

The second fait-accompli with which the President was confronted on his arrival in Paris was the extension of the armistice for thirty days. It expired December 11, and by its terms seventy-two hours were allowed for its denunciation (until the morning of December 14).

If Mr. Wilson had sailed from New York on December first he would have been in Paris in time to participate in the deliberations of the Supreme War Council upon the terms of the armistice renewal. The allied governments could scarcely have avoided meeting him face to face at that time on the issue there presented.

Under Mr. Wilson's interpretation of the peace agreement, the Armistice Commission would have been restricted to measures relating to military disarmament; the fixing of obligations to be assumed by Germany would have been held in suspense until the civilian conference then assembling in Paris had deliberated upon the matter and reached certain broad decisions, whereupon the German plenipotentiaries would have been called into the conference.

This was not the purpose of the Supreme War Council. They deliberated at Paris and took their decisions while the George Washington was yet at sea. By these decisions they conferred powers upon the Armistice Commission which made it an agency of general negotiation between them and the German Govern-

ment, and which practically delegated the authority of the Supreme War Council to Marshal Foch for a period of thirty days. The Council had sat and risen before President Wilson arrived in Paris.[30]

It would seem that American agents in Europe, if they had been, in fact, closely observant of the manner in which Entente purposes were shaping themselves, might have seen the advisability of Mr. Wilson's presence in time to participate in the deliberations upon the first renewal of the armistice, and have urged upon him the desirability of choosing a date of sailing which would enable him to be present on that momentous occasion. No such suggestion reached President Wilson. One is reluctant to think that intrigue among the foreigners might have sought to delay the President's departure, and consequently his arrival in Paris.

The renewal of the armistice had the far-reaching result of putting all initiative with regard to Germany

[30]On Monday, December 16, the Temps announced that the armistice had been prolonged at Treves, on the 13th of December, in the morning, in the private car of Marshal Foch, until January 17, 1919, at 5 a. m. It announced that several added conditions were imposed, and a new guarantee—to occupy the neutral zone "if judged good."

It stated that it learned from German sources that two and one-half million tons of merchant shipping in German ports were to be placed under control of the allies, "in view of being able to furnish food to Germany," the vessels to remain the property of Germany. The British demanded the cruiser "Boden" in place of the "Mackensen".

A financial clause (protocole financier) was included, under which Germany was not to dispose of metal cash, goods or credits abroad. The instrument was signed by Foch, Wemyss, Erzberger, Obendorff, Winterfeld and Von Selow.

out of the hands of the civilians gathering at Paris until January 14, 1919, when it would again become necessary for the Supreme War Council to renew the mandate of the Armistice Commission (or to modify or abolish it if a preliminary treaty had been drawn up in the meantime.)

The third fait-accompli, which was calculated powerfully to aid the Armistice Commission in any application of pressure upon the German Government and people which its purposes might require, was the extension of the British Naval Blockade, which had been maintained for four years before the German North Sea ports, to the entire German Baltic Coast. This was done in the first week in December, while President Wilson was on the high seas, and without knowledge of it or means of protesting, and was confirmed by Orders in Council.

During the war Germany had held the straits, and was able to carry on her domestic coast-wise trade along the Baltic, as well as commerce with the Scandanavian countries. The Baltic and North Sea fisheries also supplied abundant sea-food to the German population.

The 26th article of the armistice instrument of November 11, provided that the existing blockade conditions were to remain during the period of armistice, and that all German ships at sea should remain liable to capture.

This provision was construed by the British Privy Council to authorize the extension of the blockade after

the armistice, with war-time rigor, to the German Baltic Coast from Kiel to Koenigsburg.

It brought coast-wise domestic commerce to a standstill (at the same time that the taking of rolling-stock by the Armistice Commission was paralysing the railways), permitted nothing to go out of Germany except coal and potash, which the allies needed, and prohibited entirely the importation of food supplies and food fish.

In view of the inconsistence of this last prohibition with the 26th article of the armistice instrument of November 11, which contemplated supplying food to the German population during the continuance of the armistice, of President Wilson's announcement to Congress on November 11, that food relief for the German population was already being undertaken, with the co-operation of the allied governments, and of his assurance of November 12, through the Swiss Chargé to the German Government, that such relief would be undertaken at once, an analysis of the purpose of the Europeans is beginning to be accompanied with no great difficulty.

These three measures disclose Europe to be united in direct opposition to President Wilson and his peace purposes. They constituted a rigid triangular framework, into which the peace about to be concluded at Paris would inevitably be fitted, and which would give that peace its character, unless before the process of peace-making began, the framework were rejected or rebuilt.

The British elections were the base of the triangle, of which the Armistice Commission and the Naval

Blockade were the other two sides. The base of the triangle, the British elections, had been constructed in the space of one week; in the same week the extended blockade was put in operation, and the Supreme Council delegated its authority to Foch, thus completing the framework of the triangle.

British elections are easy to hold if the government desires to consult the people, and somewhat difficult if it does not. A change of heart on the part of Lloyd George and his Ministry, resulting from persuasion experienced at Paris in late December, might easily have been followed in January by new elections in England, in which a more perfectly enlightened electorate could have expressed its will in a different sense from the December elections. Thus the base of the triangle having given way, the two sides would have fallen, leaving the field at Paris clear for an American peace instead of an Entente peace.

If, on the other hand, the triangular framework were not demolished, the making of such a peace as President Wilson contemplated would become a task of almost superhuman difficulty.

This was the situation when President Wilson disembarked at Brest and stood on French soil.

CHAPTER IV

American-Entente Solidarity.

THE George Washington entered the harbor of Brest on Friday, December 13, amid the thunders of the Presidential salute. The ceremonies attending the disembarkation were entirely in the hands of the French. Foreign Minister Pichon and Minister of Marine Leygues boarded the George Washington and delivered short addresses of welcome. In the party also which went aboard the transport were General Pershing, General Bliss, Admirals Sims, Mayo, Benson and Wilson. Colonel House was indisposed at Paris and was represented by Mr. Gordon Auchincloss.

When the President stepped upon the municipal pier he was met by the Mayor of Brest, who made an address formally extending the freedom of the city and delivering the keys of the city to the President. In reply the President expressed the pleasure he felt that he had come "to join my counsel with that of your own public men in bringing about a peace settlement which shall be consistent alike with the ideals of France and the ideals of the United States". A committee of twenty-two deputies was also at Brest to meet the President.

At 4 p. m. the presidential train departed for Paris. The same official delegation which had met him at Brest on the part of the Government of France welcomed him upon his arrival the next morning at Paris, the President's train having been stopped for a brief

period en route in order to permit the French delegation to arrive in Paris by another train at an earlier hour.

In the Bois de Bologne Station, which had been decorated with carpets and palms, the President and his party were greeted by President Poincaré and Madam Poincaré, Premier Clemenceau, André Tardieu, High Commissioner to the United States, and other officials. The party was then driven in carriages through cheering crowds to the Murat residence, which was to be the President's home in Paris.

The morning was engrossed in official amenities. A call of ceremony at the Murat residence was made by President Poincaré, and was immediately returned by President Wilson at the Elysée Palace. This was followed at once by an official luncheon at the Elysée, at which it was necessary for President Wilson to reply to the toast which President Poincaré offered.

After the luncheon at the Elysée, the President returned to the Murat residence where he had a short conference with Colonel House, which was immediately followed by a formal reception in the salon of the Murat residence to the French civilian and military functionaries in Paris.

The luncheon at the Elysée was the first occasion when, as it were, France and America met each other face to face, when the Presidents of France and the United States interchanged in person and in public the greetings of the nations. It was one of those rare occasions in the intercourse of states when the aloof and impersonal dealings of foreign offices, with their

guarded and wary methods, is replaced by the revealing interchanges of human contact and human personality. The customary formal intercourse between foreign offices may readily be carried on without disclosing the motives of the chancelleries. In word-of-mouth conversations of men in the flesh, who are also heads of state, and when the policies of governments are involved, there is a greatly heightened interest. On such an occasion as the Elysée luncheon, national emotions would be authoritatively expressed and sentimental relationships disclosed. It was one of those occasions to which the trained and savage diplomacy of the Old World looked for distinct advantage.

In toasting the Head of the American State, President Poincare's address was exactly of the nature which one familiar with the recent deliberations of the Supreme War Council might have looked for. It consisted of a eulogy of President Wilson and the American Army, and an indictment of the Germans with a demand for their punishment. Its significant part follows:

"They (the American soldiers) brought with them in arriving here the enthusiasm of crusaders leaving for the Holy Land. It is their right today to look with pride upon the work accomplished, and to rest assured that they have powerfully aided by their courage and their faith.

Eager as they were to meet the enemy, they did not know when they arrived the enormity of his crimes. That they might know how the German armies made war it has been necessary that they see towns systematically burned down, mines flooded, factories reduced to ashes, orchards devastated,

cathedrals shelled and fired, all that deliberate savagery aimed to destroy national wealth, nature and beauty, which the imagination could not conceive at a distance from the men and things that have endured it and today bear witness to it.

In your turn, Mr. President, you will be able to measure with your own eyes the extent of these disasters, and the French Government will make known to you the authentic documents, in which the German General Staff developed with astounding cynicism its program of pillage and industrial annihilation.

Your noble conscience will pronounce a verdict on these facts. Should this guilt remain unpunished, could it be renewed, the most splendid victories would be in vain.

Mr. President, France has struggled, has endured and has suffered during four long years; she has bled at every vein; she has lost the best of her children; she mourns for her youths. She yearns now, even as you do, for a peace of justice and security. It was not that once again she might be exposed to aggression that she submitted to such sacrifices. Nor was it that criminals should go unpunished, that they might lift their heads again to make ready for new crimes, that under your strong leadership America armed herself and crossed the ocean. . . ."[31]

At its conclusion the President of France raised his glass, and President Wilson rose to reply.

The scene and the occasion afforded room only for felicitations. The moving words of President Poincare required something more than a colorless response. An expression of jarring sentiments would shock a sense of the fitness of things and offend the canons of good taste.

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[31]World Almanac, 1919.

But President Poincaré's address was in fact a demand for retribution upon the hated enemy. It expressed in the polished tones of the salon what was breathed with unconcealed passion upon the streets. It sought to leave the President no room for compromise. Its burden seemed to be, "Say whether you are with us; for all who are not with us are against us".

President Wilson's manner in replying was gracious. After testifying to "the quick contact of sympathy and unaffected friendship between the representatives of the United States and the representatives of France," he said:

"From the first, the thought of the people of the United States turned toward something more than the mere winning of the war. It turned to the establishment of the eternal principles of right and justice. It realized that merely to win the war was not enough; that it must be won in such a way and the questions raised by it settled in such a way, as to ensure the future peace of the world, and lay the foundation for the freedom and happiness of its many peoples and nations.

Never before has war worn so terrible a visage, or exhibited more grossly the debasing influence of illicit ambitions.

I am sure I shall look upon the ruin wrought by the armies of the Central Empires with the same repulsion and deep indignation that they stir in the hearts of the men of France and Belgium, and I appreciate, as you do, Sir, the necessity of such action in the final settlement of the issues of the war as will not only rebuke such acts or terror and spoliation, but make men everywhere aware that they cannot be ventured upon without the certainty of just punishment ..."[32]

There is here some shifting of ground, probably un-

[32]World Almanac, 1919.

consciously made. Circumstances indicate that in this response the President was speaking impromptu. It is not probable that the written address of Poincaré had been handed him in advance of the occasion, and that his reply was a studied response to it. There began here a long-continued personal contact between the President and the European representatives, which was characterized by entire informality; and none of the barriers were afterwards interposed which customarily hedge the head of a state from contacts which might be embarrassing or inconvenient.

At the Elysée the circumstances, as the President understood them, demanded that he say all that could possibly be said, without misleading his audience, to make manifest the fact of international good-will. He was not speaking in secret council—he was speaking to the Entente peoples. Even if he possessed knowledge that the Entente governments were tainted with wrong motive, this was a most unsuitable occasion to show dissent.

Conscious of the requirements of the occasion, the President sought to picture a just peace, one that would "lay the foundations for the freedom and happiness of the world's many peoples and nations."

At the same time he sought to respond generously to President Poincaré's powerful appeal for national sympathy, and to go as far as might be consistent with his own position in recognizing the justice of the French demand that wrong be expiated. Hence the response "I appreciate, as you do, Sir, the necessity of such action in the final settlement of the issues of the war as will

not only rebuke such acts of terror and spoliation, but make men everywhere aware that they cannot be entered upon without the certainty of just punishment".

These words were not intended to carry a suggestion of a peace based upon retribution and vengeance. Addressed to a different audience, and taken in connection with their context, they might not have imported a meaning inconsistent with a settlement actuated by liberal and generous motives so far as the masses in Central Europe were involved.

But in his promise that the settlement should involve "the certainty of just punishment" the President allowed himself to be drawn on by the influence of the occasion to a point where his utterances infringed his own principles, for the spirit and letter of the compromise peace already signed provided no basis of right for such punishment.

Addressed to the European audience to which he spoke, and to the European public, these words were understood in a different spirit from that in which they were uttered. They increased the confidence of the advocates of the Entente Peace, and they chilled the aspirations of those who were looking to President Wilson "to lead mankind upon the road to a less painful and less bloody future." In the response at the Elysée luncheon the quality of mercy (which was the key to the Wilson peace and to the league of nations) was strained. Without intending abatement of his principles the President here distinctly lost ground.

An enormously important factor at this time among the circumstances surrounding the making of the peace

was the psychological condition of the Europeans. It was the first condition to be met and treated upon the President's arrival there. It was the condition which he was least prepared to meet. That he was misinformed as to what the condition was is readily seen by the course which he followed, and by his utterances during the following three weeks.

(President Wilson's attitude, and that of America, was one of genuine sympathy with the Entente peoples, and of unbounded good-will toward them. To oppose or block them in any just purpose was utterly remote from the President's consciousness. His attitude toward the peoples of Central Europe was one of charity; the objects of his indignation had been the autocratic rulers who had misled them, and whom he had just driven from power forever. Magnanimity toward the fallen enemy underlay the lofty language of the closing paragraphs of the President's address to Congress on armistice day, and he took it almost for granted that all the world would unite in translating those sentiments into action at Paris. He had proclaimed them clearly, and the Entente Governments had applauded and approved. He expected to enter into deliberation with lofty and noble intellects, with minds immune from the canker of hatred.)

The character of the peace which the President had clearly outlined, the fundamental emotions to which he had constantly appealed for its sanction, and which had won for him his great moral leadership, involved the replacing of war stimuli in the minds of men by those emotional impulses which permit the mind to

resume the rational courses of thought that gradually carry them back into the ways and environment of peace.

This trend in the emotions could not be imparted by any of Europe's leaders. Europe's spiritual leadership had been exhausted by the war; only the predatory instincts remained. It was given up to seething hatred, and to that instinct for vengeance which a fighting animal feels when it sees its adversary, somewhat unexpectedly, at its mercy. The people were uninformed, they were tired of war, they wanted peace, but they were inert. They could be led in any direction that authority might determine. They could be made to respond either to sentiments of magnanimity or to those which would reawaken the dying flames of war hatred.

The danger to the American peace, then, lay in the psychology of Europe's rulers and its ruling classes. It would be necessary to introduce among them a new cast of thought, for if war hatred and cupidity continued to obsess them, it was in their power to communicate the same hatred and cupidity to their people, and to oppose the President with a united front.

So formidable might such united opposition be, and so probable was it that it would be encountered, that, had President Wilson been appraised of it and fully prepared to meet the danger, it is hardly probable that events in Paris would have taken the course they did. Had accurate intelligence of psychological conditions been imparted to him, and equally accurate intelligence of the concerted European purpose, the President himself possessed the capacity to meet the situation, and

it would have been in his power to keep the control of events in his own hands.

Mr. Wilson, if fully appraised of the conditions, in looking back over history for a parallel case, would instantly have found it in the policy and course of action of President Abraham Lincoln toward the close of the Civil War. In the long days and nights of relative freedom from turmoil which Mr. Wilson passed on board the George Washington before arriving in France, the nobility of Lincoln's statesmanship would have stood forth as the model for his own, and contemplation of the superb moral courage of Lincoln's personal character would have inspired him with the strength to overcome all combinations of forces which might be massed to block the consummation of a just peace. The spirit of Lincoln's second inaugural would have been the point of departure of his policy, "With malice toward none, with charity for all," a policy which, upon landing in Europe, he would reveal in plain words and which would have left no doubt as to what was the issue involved in the making of the peace.

The President might also have recalled from the storehouse of his literary culture the closing scene of the Fourth Act of Hernani. Standing before the tomb of Charlemagne, in the vaulted cavern of Aix-la-Chapelle, with the hooded conspirators who had sought there to take his life foiled and standing before him awaiting judgment, Don Carlos pardons all, confers upon Hernani the Golden Fleece and raises him to high place in the state as Don Juan of Arragon. As the last of the concourse departs, he upon whose shoulders as Charles

V the Imperial purple has just fallen, apostrophises the mighty shade to whose vast power he now succeeds:

> * * * I implored thee
> Greatly to lead me through my awful trust,
> And thou hast whispered me, 'Begin with Mercy'!"

All the peoples of the world, with their aspiration for better things, were receptive, and world public opinion was ready to be mobilized in irresistible support of such a cause. Only the forces of hatred, now turning the agencies of war propaganda to their own ends, entrenched behind the reactionary chancelleries of Europe; and that colossus which now bestrode the Continent, the Supreme War Council, were intent upon a different and inconsistent settlement. Between President Wilson and the Supreme War Council there was no alternative but war to the death, the elemental struggle between right and wrong.

The terrain of the contest was that chosen by the Supreme War Council. It was a region of intellectual fog and mist, a moral ground of shifting sand and morass, an environment of intangible things, of subtlety and indirection.

The strategy of the Supreme War Council was, first of all, to divide the forces of the enemy. It was its only hope of victory. Behind President Wilson lay the irresistible reserves of world public opinion. If utilized against the Supreme War Council no advantages of terrain could possibly save its forces from defeat. Therefore President Wilson must be cut off from his reserves, he must be met and defeated first; after which

the resistance of a leaderless public opinion would be quickly dissipated.

When President Wilson was approaching the shores of France the European chancelleries had no certain knowledge whether American agencies had detected and communicated to the American President the daring coup which they were even then executing in the erection of the Triangular Framework for the peace. Its nature was so essentially hostile to their solemn engagements with him and with America, and its conception so audacious, that, if it had been detected, the President would be arriving in Europe in a far different mood than had characterized his attitude toward the Entente governments before he left New York. In this matter the Supreme War Council had much at stake.

The bearing and utterances of the President, upon arrival, would clear this point up. If the President knew the significance of the Triangular Framework, and the mental reaction which it produced in him was strong; then, coincident with his arrival in France, a crisis in the relations of the Entente Governments and the United States would be precipitated. The Supreme War Council would have to enter into deliberations immediately of the gravest character with the Americans, and the tense situation would have to be handled in instant and secret conference. This they were prepared to do.[33]

[33]The correspondent of the London Times in Paris wrote at this time that he had good authority for stating the following outline of proceedings as probable:

"Super-conference to be held at Trianon upon President Wilson's arrival. Broad outlines to be settled; to last into January; next step,

With the possibility of a short sharp struggle in view, the Europeans were prepared for an immediate conference to be opened the week of December 16. There would be no publicity until its trend was disclosed to them. It would be a wordy battle behind closed doors, and whatever its outcome the negotiators would come forth from it with smiling faces and the appearance of harmony before the world. There would be no appeal to public opinion, for the Supreme War Council knew that if the truth were disclosed its own defeat that would be quick and decisive.

If it resulted in the establishment of American supremacy, the work of demolishing the Triangular Framework would be performed at once, with the same lack of ostentation with which it had been constructed. Public opinion would not have been aware either of its construction or demolition. The Supreme War Council would retrace its steps, which it had carefully covered, and its face would be saved. Negotiations for the merciful peace would thereupon be instituted in the light of day.

But after the luncheon at the Elysée Palace on December 14, and before a week had elapsed, no European statesman could fail to see that President Wilson either did not understand, and had not been appraised by his agents, of the significance of the Triangular Framework, of the three faits-accomplis which had

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summoning in March or April of plenary peace conference of allied nations. A league of nations to be planned and submitted at a subsequent conference. No proper government exists at present to represent Germany."

changed the whole European scene while he was on the Atlantic; or that if he were aware of them, they met his approval, and that, notwithstanding his public declarations, he was satisfied that the peace should be moulded and fitted into the Triangular Framework.

Subsequent developments indicate that the first of these alternative speculations was adopted by them, and was the correct one.

In either event the European statesmen perceived that, even if a crisis was to come at all in their relations with the Americans, it would not have to be met at the outset. Inasmuch as the Triangular Framework was not to be repudiated and demolished by America at once, the successful achievement of the Entente Peace could be hopefully predicted, as it would now proceed automatically towards its own execution through the agency of the Armistice Commission, which was already proceeding with small regard to the deliberations of the civilians at Paris.

The crystallization of European purposes was immediate. The proceedings at Paris were now to be developed merely into a process of "killing time," and of solicitous care that a state of personal harmony be maintained. No situation must be allowed to rise which would precipitate an issue with America over the juridical bases of the rights of conquest and tribute, which would carry with it on the part of the American President an appeal to public opinion in America, in the Entente countries, and throughout the world.

The conference was clearly to open in an atmosphere of good feeling. This was recognized as an

enormous advantage. It was a posture of events which greatly heartened the Old World negotiator. With reference to Germany, where the extortions of the Armistice Commission and the heavy pressure of the hunger blockade were beginning to make the purposes of the Entente clear, and where President Wilson was beginning to be looked upon as the single source from which an influence might come to restrain the merciless purpose of the Entente, this fact could be used with crushing effect in breaking German moral resistance, by showing that the United States and President Wilson purposed the same sort of settlement as the Entente demanded.

The Entente statesmen, therefore, perceiving that there was no pressure for the immediate convocation of formal conferences to undo what was already done, encouraged a succession of ceremonials, formalities, and popular receptions in honor of the American President, which would have the effect of creating universally an impression of profound agreement and unity of purpose between the Government of the United States and the Entente Governments (creating a conviction in the public mind which at a later date statesmen would naturally be loth to destroy), and which would occupy the President while time, so necessary to their own concrete purposes, was running.

These ceremonies, conceived with the most elaborate circumspection and conducted with exquisite tact and courtesy, were steadily expanded into a program which took President Wilson to England and Italy, and lasted

from the time of his arrival in Paris on December 14 to January 7, 1919, when he returned there.[34]

[34]During the first three weeks of his sojourn in Europe President Wilson's activities were as follows—(World Almanac):

Saturday, December 14; formal exchange of visits with President Poincaré, official dejouner at Elysée Palace, conference at Murat residence with Colonel House, reception by the President to diplomatic corps and government officials.

Sunday, December 15; conference with House, conference with Clemenceau.

Tuesday, December 17; President laid wreath on tomb of Lafayette, attended memorial service, received Jusserand, then Clemenceau, dined with Colonel House.

Friday, December 20; received official visit of King Victor Immanuel of Italy; Colonel House represented President Wilson at Luncheon at Elysée to King of Italy.

Saturday, December 21; Foreign Minister Pichon gave dinner to King of Italy at which Colonel House represented President Wilson. King of Italy departed. President worked in morning with Colonel House; received Orlando and Sonnino at 10:30 a. m. In afternoon returned formal visit of King of Italy.

Sunday, December 22; Sorbonne conferred degree honora causa upon President.

Tuesday, December 24; Visit to American Hospital at Neuilly, also Val de Grace.

Wednesday, December 25; Church. President visited Langres to review American troops, dined there.

Thursday, December 26; President met at Dover in name of King by Duke of Connaught. Great demonstration in London, "Bank Holliday." Party met at Charing Cross by King George, the Queen, and Princess Mary. King, Queen, President and Mrs. Wilson appeared in balcony of Buckingham Palace where President spoke a few words to the multitude. Dinner with the King.

Friday, December 27; President received Prime Minister Lloyd George. Luncheon with Prime Minister at Downing Street; conference with British War Cabinet and leaders of all political parties—present, George, Crewe, Curzon, Reading, Gray, Morley, Brice, Balfour, Bonar Law, Asquith, Henderson, Adamson.

December 28; President guest of Lord Mayor of London at Guild

On the President's part, the opportunity to meet and find common ground with many men in high authority, to gain personal contact with the peoples of the Entente countries, to observe and gauge their feelings and sentiments, and above all to inspire popular support for his own purposes, seemed to recommend and justify the program to him.

Seeing a greater analogy between the relations of the peoples of Europe to their governments, and the relation of the people of the United States to their government, than sound observation justified, the

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Hall, luncheon at Mansion House, dinner with Prime Minister and Imperial War Cabinet; conference, President, Lloyd George and Balfour.

December 29; At Manchester, at Carlisle.

December 30; Freedom of Manchester; speeches at Free Trade Hall, luncheon at Midland Hotel. President returned to London, dined with King.

Tuesday, December 31; President returned to France.

Wednesday, January 1; President rested.

Thursday, January 2; En route Italy.

Friday, January 3; President in Rome; spoke before Italian Parliament.

Saturday, January 4; President received by King Victor Immanuel at Quirinale Palace, address by King. President at residence of American Ambassador received Salandra and Bissolati. Made member Royal Academy of Science. Received at Vatican by Pope. Left Rome for Genoa.

Sunday, January 5; Genoa. President delivered address at monument of Mazzini, also at Statue of Columbus; acknowledged gift of Mazzini's works from Municipality. At Milan, spoke at Royal Palace to large delegation; replied to address of welcome by Mayor.

Monday, January 6; President at Turin. Responded to address of welcome at luncheon given by Mayor, spoke at University of Turin. Made address at Municipal Building after receiving freedom of City.

President believed that popular opinion in the Entente countries might be made to exercise a strong pressure upon the governments in favor of his policies, should the aid of such pressure become necessary during the subsequent negotiations.

The President remained in France for ten days occupied with ceremonials and informal conferences. The King of Italy and the Prince of Piedmont came to Paris on the 19th; the King paid a formal call upon the President on the 20th, who returned the call at the Foreign Office the next day.

On the morning of the 21st also the President accorded a long interview to Premier Orlando and Foreign Minister Sonnino of Italy. At this interview began the interminable discussions over the Italian boundary, with their clashes between doctrinaire principles and the practical necessities of the case, which continued intermittently and with increasing ascerbity until the ultimate withdrawal of the Italians from the conference in the following April.

On Sunday the President received the degree of doctor honoris causa from the Sorbonne and made a felicitous speech, which appealed to the generous sentiments of his hearers and sought to further the cause of the peace of moderation which he had come to Europe to make. Yet the atmosphere of hatred against the hereditary enemy of the French was all about him, and he was being subtlely influenced—not to abandon his insistence upon justice and right, but to manifest a generous recognition of the degree of sympathy to

which the French nation was entitled. Hence, in acknowledging the honor conferred upon him, he thought it fitting to contrast Gallic culture with that of Germany to the great disadvantage of the latter. The President then went on to emphasize the fact that the negotiators at Paris must be guided by the great force of moral right, and that the decisions made must be consonant with the wishes of public opinion:

"The triumph of freedom in this war means that that spirit shall now dominate the world. There is a great wave of moral force now moving through the world, and every man who opposes himself to that wave will go down in disgrace.

"The tasks of those who are gathered here, or presently will be gathered here, to make the settlements of this peace, is greatly simplified by the fact that they are the masters of no one; they are the servants of mankind, and if we do not heed the mandates of mankind we shall make ourselves the most conspicuous and deserved failures in the history of the world.

"My conception of the league of nations is just this—that it shall operate as the organized moral force of men throughout the world, and that wherever and whenever wrong and aggression are planned or contemplated, this searching light of conscience will be turned upon them."

The President appears to have regarded Orlando, and especially Sonnino, as types of the reactionary statesmen whose policies were to be discredited by the new diplomacy. In neither the British nor the French statesmen does he appear to have perceived similar characteristics. He had already set his face against any such settlement of the Italian boundary as the Declaration of London of 1915 contemplated, and which they sought to have put into force. The Presi-

dent's Sorbonne address, following within twenty-four hours upon his long interview with the Italians, declaring that every statesman who opposed himself to the great wave of moral force now moving through the world would go down in disgrace, seems quite probably to have been suggested to him by the results of that interview, and to have been a plain warning to the Italian statesmen, and to all others who might seek to obstruct the proper settlement of the peace, of the consequences which such a course of obstruction would bring upon themselves. The President at this time was convinced of the supreme power of public opinion and of his own leadership of it.

If, however, in his controversy with the Italian statesmen over the Italian boundary the President hoped that an appeal by him to the people of Italy would compel the Italian Government to yield, he must have been guided by fatally defective or insincere advice. The people of Italy, perhaps more fully than any of the other Entente populations, were prepared to give their support to the American Peace, but it was a support which would have to have been summoned in common with that of the peoples of England, France and the United States, and directed to the accomplishment of a common cause. To ask the Italian people at the outset to sacrifice the irredenta populations was not a well-judged method of testing the President's leadership of Europan public opinion. A close study of this long and devastating controversy leads to the conclusion that it was in its nature a general European intrigue to destroy American leadership.

On the 24th of December the President left Paris to spend Christmas Day with the American troops at Langres, then to go immediately to London to accept the invitation of his Britannic Majesty to visit England.

The President had been in Paris for ten days. There is not a trace of evidence to indicate that his advisors had brought to him the concrete proofs of the duplicity with which he was being encompassed. The subtlety of the Europeans, notwithstanding the signs which were visible in salons, hotel lobbies, in the press, and on the street, had disarmed suspicion and had produced in the President's mind a sense of accord and of general acquiescence in the purposes which he entertained. The only occurrence of these ten days which stands out in clear relief is the opening episode of the dangerous Italian controversy. Such opposition as the President had there encountered appeared to him to be of minor importance.

The President's words to the American troops at Langres on Christmas Day do not reveal the slightest suspicion that the American peace was in peril. On the contrary they show confidence and optimism:

"Everybody concerned in the settlement knows that it must be a peoples' peace, and that nothing must be done in the settlement of the issues of the war which is not as handsome as the great achievements of the armies of the United States and the allies.

"You knew what we expected of you and you did it. I know what you and the people at home expected of me, and I am happy to say, My Fellow Countrymen, that I do not find in the hearts of the great leaders with whom it is now my

privilege to cooperate, any difference of principle or of fundamental purpose. It happened that it was the privilege of America to present the chart for peace.

"And now the process of settlement has been rendered comparatively simple by the fact that all the nations concerned have accepted that chart, and by the application of these principles the world will now know that the nations who fought this war as well as the soldiers who represented them, are ready to make good, not only in the assertion of their own interests, but make good in the establishment of peace upon the permanent foundation of right and justice."

Thus, at Christmas time, having been in contact with the French and Italian statesmen for ten days, the President is able to say that he does not find in their hearts any difference of principle or of fundamental purpose. He believed that all nations had "accepted the chart which it was the privilege of America to present." He felt no doubt as to the sincerity of the Continental statesmen in this vital matter.

The President and his party arrived in London the day after Christmas, having been met at Dover by the Duke of Connaught in the name of the King. At Charing Cross they were met by the King, the Queen and Princess Mary. Press accounts stated that London, which was celebrating "Bank Holiday," gave the President "an absolutely royal welcome." After arriving at Buckingham Palace the President and Mrs. Wilson, with the King and the Queen in the background, appeared for a few moments at one of the Palace balconies to acknowledge the salutations of the people.

In response to the toast of the King at the official

dinner given that night in the Royal Palace the President said:

"It will take more moral courage to resist the great moral tide which is running through the world than to submit to and obey it. There is a great current in the hearts of men. The hearts of men have never before beaten in such remarkable unison. Never before have men been so conscious of their brotherhood. Never before have they really understood how little difference there was between the words right and justice in one latitude or another, under one sovereignty or another.

"It will be our high privilege to apply not only the moral judgment of the world to particular rules, but to organize the moral force of humanity, and establish that right and justice to which our great nations are devoted."

It is important to note that on the morning of the next day the President received Prime Minister Lloyd George. This meeting was followed by a luncheon given by the Prime Minister in Downing Street, at which the members of the British War Cabinet and the leaders of all the political parties were present. The presence of Asquith, Henderson and Adamson indicated the harmony with which all political parties were supporting the Ministry.[35]

[35]The following announcements were made the next day in the public press:

"Reuters Agency announces that it is authorized to say that the conversations between President Wilson and the War Cabinet were satisfactory. They comprised many subjects and included the Fourteen Points."—London Times, December 28.

"Conferences between Lloyd George, Balfour and President Wilson were in the highest degree satisfactory."—London Times, December 28.

Concerning the results of these meetings the President said the next day at Guild Hall.

"In my conferences with the directors of your Government, it was very agreeable to recognize how our ideas followed the same direction, and our thoughts were always that the key of the peace was the guarantee of the peace and not its details; that the details would have no value unless a concert of powers was behind them".

The ceremonies at the Guild Hall on Saturday were conducted amidst a scene of great splendour, in which the scarlet robes of the Aldermen, and the white wigs and mediaeval costumes of functionaries, afforded a picture such as is never seen in the United States. Here the President spoke of the remarkable unity of emotions which he found, saying that the war had been fought to end an old order and create a new; that the principle of a balance of power held by the sword must be abandoned, and the principle of a league of nations adopted, that this was once regarded as a hope of cloistered students, something to think of but never attain, but that now we find practical statesmen determined to attain it. The coming peace conference, he said, would prove to be the "final enterprise of humanity."

At the Mansion House where the President was the guest of the Lord Mayor he spoke informally in a way that awoke the warmest response. In optimistic tones he said:

"Our spirits are released from the darkness of clouds that at one time seemed to have settled upon the world in a way that would not be dispersed; the sufferings of your own people, the sufferings of the people of France, the infinite suffering of

the people of Belgium, the whisper of grief that has blown all through the world, is now silent, and the sun of hope seems to spread its rays and to charge the earth with a new prospect of happiness. So our joy is all the more elevated because we know that our spirits are now lifted out of the valley."

The President dined that night with the Imperial War Cabinet, and again held conferences with Lloyd George and Balfour.[36]

The reception accorded the President in Manchester the next day, as was to be expected in that industrial center, was no less enthusiastic but much more informal. Replying to the address of the Mayor at Free Trade Hall on December 29 the President said:

"If the future has nothing for us but a new attempt to keep the world at a right poise by a balance of power, the United States would take no interest, because she will join no combination of nations which is not a combination of all of us. She is not interested merely in the peace of Europe, but in the peace of the world".

He spoke again of the great voice of humanity abroad in the world which the statesmen of all nations must heed and obey or go down in ignominious disgrace. "And now that there is no common enemy ex-

[36]The Imperial War Cabinet no doubt made real use of the following:

"The Spartacist Group have proclaimed a Liebknecht-Ledebour government to overthrow Ebert and Haase."—(Berlin dispatch to London, December 27.)

"Reports have reached the Hague that the extremists have seized power in Berlin, and that Herr Ebert's Government is virtually no longer existent."—(London Times, December 28.)

The first of these dispatches was misleading and the second was distinctly false.

cept distrust and marring of plans, we can all feel the same eagerness in the new combat and feel there is a common enterprise before us". "Now that there is no common enemy", says the President. Quite obviously he visualizes the reestablishment of a general spirit of friendship with the former enemies, and when he says at Free Trade Hall, "the United States would join no combination of nations which is not a combination of all of us," he visualizes a league of nations which will include the enemy nations also. His expressions were general, however, and seemed to raise no concrete issue.

President Wilson returned to London, December 30, and dined again with their Majesties at Buckingham Palace. The results of the elections of December 14, theretofore undisclosed, were announcd in the London papers on that day. The next day, the last of December, the President was again in France.

President Wilson had been in England nearly a week. Nothing in the circumstances of his visit as the guest of the British Sovereign awakened distrust of the motives of his hosts, or suspicion that it was their purpose to sabotage the American Peace.

The President's words continued to breathe unimpaired confidence in his own principles, and gave every indication that he expected the full and ungrudging support of the British Ministry in translating them into a concrete peace settlement. When he told his Guild Hall audience that he had found that the ideas of the British Ministers had followed the same direction as his own, and that their thoughts were always that the key of

the peace was the guarantee of the peace and not its details, there seems little doubt that whatever was in the minds of the British Ministers, the guarantee which the President visualized was a league of nations which should include all, enemies as well as friends, and that he expected the cooperation of the British Ministry to this end. The conversation of the Ministers with whom he had been closetted had assured him of frank cooperation and support for the American Peace, which all knew must be based squarely upon the provisions of the Trianon Hotel Pact. The Old World's most astute and polished minds, cooperating in a single purpose, and exercising exquisite tact in a disingenuous cause, had not only concealed the plot which had constructed the Triangular Framework of the Entente Peace, but by exhausting the arts of hypocracy, had confirmed the American President in the conviction that they frankly accepted his leadership.

New Year's Day was spent in Paris. The next day the President left for Rome where he arrived Friday, January 3. The Italian journey included visits to Genoa, Milan and Turin.

These visits were remarkable for the enthusiasm of the popular demonstrations with which the President was greeted. His own enthusiasm seemed to rise in harmony with it. At the University of Turin, where a degree was conferred upon him, the President best expressed the magnitude of the hope which he entertained for better things.

"After all when we are seeking peace we are seeking nothing else than this: that men shall think the same thoughts, govern

themselves by the same impulses, entertain the same purposes, love their own people but also love humanity, and above all else love that great and indestructible thing which we call justice and right".[37]

The unlimited confidence and enthusiasm with which, in Italy, the President forecast a healing peace, and the great emotional enthusiasm with which the people received him, were both enhanced, and are largely accounted for, by the plain inference to be drawn from

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[37]Some of the more significant of the utterances of President Wilson in Italy are quoted below:

"The world is not now going to consist of great empires. It is going to consist for the most part of small nations apparently, and the only thing that can bind such nations together is the knowledge that each wants to treat the other fairly. . .

"The social structure rests upon the great working classes of the world, and those working classes in several countries of the world have, by their consciousness of community of interest, by their consciousness of community of spirit, done more perhaps than any other influence has to establish a world opinion which is not of a nation, which is not of a continent, but is the opinion, one might say, of mankind. . . Those of us who are now charged with the great and serious responsibility of concluding peace must think, act and confer in the presence of this opinion. . . . We are not the masters of the fortunes of any nation, but are the servants of mankind; it is not our privilege to follow special interests but it is our manifest duty to study only the general interests. . . .The representatives of the Governments at Paris are not the real makers of war and peace; you are the makers of war and peace. The pulse of the modern world beats on the farms and in the mines and in the factories. . . .We are not foreigners to each other; we think the same thoughts, we entertain the same purposes, we have the same ideals. . . .The light that shone upon the summit now seems to shine almost at our feet, and if we lose it it will be only because we have lost faith and courage, for we have it in our power to attain it."

the attitude of the French and British statesmen, that the great powers of Europe were prepared to cooperate in the liberal settlements which the American President had outlined. In early January he himself had no doubt of this. No statesman who spoke as the President did at the University of Turin could at that time have harbored the purpose of participating in a settlement which was to repudiate moral obligation and pass upon the entire people of a fallen nation a sentence of outlawry, reducing them by a process of starvation to a state of industrial bondage.

From Turin the President returned to Paris, arriving there January 7. His words uttered in the great industrial cities of northern Italy, in addresses before throngs of people, had aroused intense enthusiasm. He voiced the aspirations of plain men and seemed to bring within measurable distance that state of universal justice of which men theretofore had only been permitted to dream. "The social structure rests upon the great working classes of the world. . . Those of us now charged with the great and serious responsibility of concluding peace must think, act and confer in the presence of this opinion. . . We are not the masters of the fortunes of any nation but are the servants of mankind. . . The pulse of the modern world beats on the farms and in the mines and in the factories. . . Men shall love their own people but shall also love humanity, and above all love that great and indestructible thing that we call justice and right. . . The light that shone upon the mountain-top now seems to shine almost at our feet, and if we lose it it will be only

because we have lost faith and courage, for we have it in our power to attain it".

The President's utterances so thrilled the masses of workers that "Il Wilsonismo," as they named the philosophy which moved them so deeply, seemed to be a force which might gain irresistible power. But except at Rome the President had spoken only in Italy's large but few industrial cities of the north. There the principles of socialism were strong and insistent, but elsewhere in Italy the new doctrines of the industrial age were scarcely known. From Tuscany and Umbria through Apulia to Sicily the lives of townsmen and contadine were keyed to a rythme which had changed but little through the long centuries.

There, instincts are strongly national, and throughout Italy, even in the industrial districts of the north, patriotic enthusiasm is so great that in any case the leadership of the foreigner is bound to be precarious, and is sure to be lost at once if it seems to fail in appreciation of Italian national interests.

While in Rome the President had been permitted to confer with the socialist, Leonida Bissolati, a member of the Cabinet who was opposing the Government's Adriatic policy. A few days later Bissolati precipitated a cabinet crisis by resigning, in the hope that the Italian Government might be forced thereby to modify its nationalistic position at Paris. Bissolati's influence and prestige were entirely insufficient to create a serious situation for the Government, and the only result of his resignation was to strengthen the hands of the Orlando Cabinet. The suggestion that influences from

without were seeking to bring about internal changes would always rally general support to the ministry in a country where nationalistic instincts were so deep as among the people of Italy.

As time passed and it became the conviction of Italians generally that President Wilson's position at Paris was hostile to Italian interests, the enthusiasm which his personality and principles had inspired to so spontaneous demonstrations at the beginning of January passed away almost as rapidly as it had appeared. It quickly gave way to criticism which, as the Italian controversy at Paris grew more involved, developed into positive hostility. The repercussion at Paris of this national feeling, where the influence of the Italians in other matters of far more general importance was not to be ignored, was to become a matter of the greatest significance.

We have seen how in England President Wilson had been robbed of the support of public opinion before his arrival, by the holding of general elections upon a dishonest issue chosen by the Ministry. In Italy the same result is obtained, but the political phenomenon which accompanies it is different. Here the President is permitted, even encouraged, to seek to increase his prestige by direct personal contact with the people, even to confer at the American Embassy with a politician who is in direct opposition to the Government's policies (for former premier Salandra accompanied Bissolati in his call upon President Wilson.)

Whether acting with the approval of President Wilson or not (whether lured on by more astute Italian

statesmen for their own purposes or not) Bissolati precipitated a crisis over the Adriatic issue, and created a situation in which the Italian people seemed to be given the alternative of supporting President Wilson or their own Government, and on an issue in which the Government's position was, in fact, approved by an overwhelming majority of the people. On this issue the Italian Government won; Bissolati resigned; and thereafter there was no more question that public opinion in Italy would support government policy in the peace conference at Paris then there was that English opinion would support the British Ministry.

The best that can be said with reference to the causes of this extraordinary episode is that President Wilson's American advisors had not sufficient knowledge of the complexities of the Italian question to advise him properly. The worst that might be said is that a peculiarly subtle political intrigue set the stage and devised the play that would rob the champion of public opinion of his leadership in Italy, and send him away in the condition of Samson shorn of his locks.

President Wilson returned to Paris on January 7 with the applause of the Italian people sounding in his ears. He was desirous of taking up at once the practical questions of the peace settlement.

These three weeks devoted to ceremonials and courtesies had a psychological aspect which sets them apart from the long months which follow in the process of making the treaty. During that time a curtain had been allowed to fall, as it were, between the participants in its activities and the realities which were mak-

ing Europe a place of misery and fear; and which shut out like a baize-covered door the confused cries of distress from without. Within there was warmth, harmony, graciousness, courtesy, good-will, hope; the creation of lasting memories of personal friendships, friendships which it was the firm purpose of all nothing should be allowed to break.[38]

Upon the President's return to Paris on January 7 the baize-covered door could not be kept entirely shut, and the raucous noises began to enter. What the Supreme War Council, the only governing body in Europe, was doing, must now be disclosed in part, at any rate, to the Americans.

[38]The Mansion House address discloses all too clearly the failure of the President to preceive how rapidly the tide of destructive forces was already running against the American Peace:

"Our spirits are released from the darkness of clouds that at one time seemed to have settled upon the world in a way that could not be dispersed, the sufferings of your own people, the sufferings of the people of France, the infinite sufferings of the people of Belgium, the whisper of grief that has blown all through the world, is now silent, and the sun of hope now seems to spread its rays and to charge the earth with a new prospect of happiness. So our joy is all the more elevated because we know that our spirits are now lifted out of the valley."

CHAPTER V

The Second Armistice Renewal.

THE pacification of Europe on an imperalistic basis, which the Supreme War Council would have been able to undertake had it been assured of American support, could not be attempted at the risk of a breach with the United States. The Supreme War Council was skillful in effecting faits-accomplis, but the use of military force on a major scale was too obvious a proceeding at a time when President Wilson was urging the spirit of conciliation upon the peoples of the Entente. That method more than any other would alienate American support.

Imperialistic policies, therefore, were cautiously pursued, with the result that the authority of Paris was everywhere distrusted or openly defied. Europe plunged deeper into disorder as a result of this play of cross purposes.

A soviet imperialism was fast forming in Russia. All along its fringes it was being fought by anti-Bolshevist volunteer organizations and governments. Archangel was being held against it. Democratic majorities in Esthonia, Lithuania and Lettland were presenting a desperate military resistance to the advance of bolshevist armies. The Letton troops lacked equipment and organization; the Lithuanian army was good. A Bolshevist regime in Riga ordered the arrest of all belonging to the bourgeois classes, and did away with

distinctions of property. Here and elsewhere bourgeois who resisted were killed or imprisoned. Adherents of the Bolshevist cause were fed and others left to starve. Admiral Kolchak at Omsk maintained an independent position at the head of an anti-bolshevist army, and to him messages of encouragement were sent through the French Foreign Office. General Denekine in the Caucasus was resisting the bolshevist advance to the southward. The Ukraine was wavering between independence and adherence to the soviet. The Bolshevist pressure against Poland was heavy; there were bolshevist disorders in Warsaw. Switzerland gave its recognition to the independent government in Lithuania. Finland sent aid to Esthonia. Bolshevism scaled the Carpathians, and was gaining a foothold in Hungary. In the German Eastmark it made no impression. A revolutionary school at Moscow, under the deanship of Karl Radek, was graduating enthusiastic propagandists to go east and west, as militant apostles of the bolshevist principle.

Poland was anti-bolshevist, but divided against itself. The ancient landed aristocracy sought to establish a Franco-Polish oligarchy as an integral part of the Entente. They would have no compromise with the Germans, and their forces were already in upper Silesia and Posen, advancing to within a hundred kilometers of the frontier of Brandenburg. The Germans resisted stubbornly, refusing to relinquish these territories until the Peace Conference had acted.

They were represented at Paris by a National Committee working in close understanding with the French

Foreign Office. Ignace Paderewski was their choice for Premier, and this choice was no doubt occasioned partly because of the popularity of the great virtuoso in the United States, a consideration which they believed would gain the support of the American Government. Paderewski arrived at Danzig on an English cruiser on December 21, and was received with great enthusiasm by Korfanty and the Poles. On the 26th he entered Posen .in a coach-and-four on his way to Warsaw.

But General Pilsudski, who had been a prisoner in Germany, headed a different element in Poland, and one no less powerful. He and his followers did not recognize the authority of the Polish National Committee at Paris. They advocated a constituent assembly in which the new Polish districts in Hungary, Lithuania, West Prussia and Posnania should take part. They sent a special commission to Paris, which arrived there January 4th, and precipitated one of the major controversies of the Peace Conference.

The new and enthusiastic republic of Czecho-Slovakia did not find it convenient to wait for the Peace Conference to define its boundaries. It occupied Troppau in Austrian Silesia on December 18, and shortly afterward Presburg. President Masaryk arrived in Prague before Christmas to give active leadership to the state. "Bohemia", said Karadnik, Minister of Railways, "must be considered henceforth as the real center of Europe". There was some difficulty in making the Slovaks realize that they were a part of the new state.

The reunion of Montenegro and Servia was an-

nounced at Paris in happily phrased terms on December 22. It was effected by the entry of French troops, after some resistance, into Cettinje, as a part of the rapid coalescence of various elements under French persuasion into the new Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (Jugoslavia) and under the Dynasty of the Karageorges.

The rapid growth of the Jugoslav state under French influence was accompanied with an equally rapid increase of apprehension in Italy. A power seemed to be growing up across the Adriatic composed of elements traditionally hostile to Italy. It challenged Italy's interests in Dalmatia, Fiume and Istria, and it was being supported by more than one of Italy's allies. In the cafes across the Adriatic Italians were being openly attacked, and were not receiving the protection of the French guards. On January 1st the commander of an American squadron in the Adriatic had said to a Jugoslav delegation." Every American is a partisan of the Jugoslav cause."

The Roumanians annexed Bukovina; they entered Transylvania and began an advance into Hungary's eastern provinces, occupying Petrosky, Hungary's only oil field. In the Banat, claimed by both Servia and Roumania, French troops took up their positions in a neutral zone to prevent the outbreak of war. Hungary, divested by force of all her territories except Budapest and the alluvial plain of the Danube, was facing intolerable conditions, and Count Karolyi, striving by a liberal administration to stay the tide of Bolshevism, warned the Entente of catastrophe and ex-

pressed the fear that Wilson would not prevail. Constantinople was occupied by British and French troops. The Batum-Baku railway across the Caucasus was being operated under British control. The blockade against Syria and Asia Minor was partially lifted.

Under this general state of affairs, living conditions for the various populations of Europe were pitifully inadequate. The great network of customs conventions, the zolverein systems of Central Europe, a slow growth out of peace-time psychology, had been swept away in the day of war. Now all frontiers were sealed. Behind them distrustful and hostile groups faced each other. The ordinary interchanges of commodities, absolutely necessary to sustain the life of the peoples, were prohibited. Actual starvation supervened everywhere.

The French had a clearcut policy. It was to give ample military support to Poland at once, and to make war on Soviet Russia. It also contemplated the military occupation of Germany, and the garrisoning of all centres of disturbance elsewhere. It sought equalibrium by movement. They hoped to involve President Wilson in this enterprise before the settlement with Germany was undertaken. The Supreme War Council, therefore, was in no hurry to organize the Peace Conference, and it had no intention of doing so, or of yielding, in any respect, to American influences until action at Paris was first taken on the renewal of the powers of the Armistice Commission, not later than the 12th of January.

Hence, while Paris was awaiting President Wilson's

return from Italy, the suggestion was being made to the Americans that preliminary meetings to fix the number of delegates and settle questions of precedure should be held about the middle of January. It was thought appropriate that a council should be created in which the Great Powers should have five delegates each and the small powers two or three, and that the latter should be represented only when their special interests were under consideration.

There was much talk about the organization of a great commission for food relief under Mr. Hoover. In this matter it was generally agreed that, with the exception of fats, Germany had enough food to carry on for a while, and that relief should first be given in territories that had been under German occupation. It was estimated that in these territories a hundred and twenty-five million people were facing starvation. A million-and-a-half tons of food, of the value of three hundred and fifty million dollars, was immediately required.

The supplying of any food to Germany was, of course, inconsistent with the successful working of the Supreme War Council's Triangular Framework. Still unaware of the existence of this framework, the Americans do not appear to have interposed any serious objection to an indefinite postponement of food relief for Germany; and throughout the winter the work of this commission, which was rapidly organized on a large scale, was confined to regions outside of Germany. It took definite organization about the middle of January, undertook the coordination of food, fi-

nances and shipping resources, and was one of the few constructive forces which emanated from Paris while the Peace Conference was sitting. It powerfully resisted the western spread of the spirit of Bolshevism; and American enterprise, energy and generosity alone made its activities possible. Out of these activities grew the body which was created on February 8th and known as the Supreme Economic Council.

Throughout December the German Government was making every appeal in its power for food relief. The peril that confronted it was not merely, like that of other parts of Europe, that its immediate needs might be ignored. It saw itself faced with a wartime blockade, more thorough than before the Armistice, whose conscious purpose was starvation. Its own efforts to obtain food from without would be directly frustrated by that blockade. Germany was not to be abandoned to starvation; starvation was to be inflicted upon it.

On December 20th, again the German Government had dared to appeal direct to the American Secretary of State, and again acceptance of the communication was refused. Appeals were made on behalf of "German womanhood and of German babies". Brockdorff-Rantzau was appointed Foreign Minister at the end of December. In accepting office he announced Germany's purpose to adhere to the Fourteen Points. Commenting on utterances of Pichon as to Entente policies he expressed doubt whether "from the ruins of past years a really new and better world would arise".

At Paris, it was said, this speech did not arouse any enthusiasm, even in American circles. Germany, they

said, should convince the world that she would not deviate from the Fourteen Points, and should know that, in spite of inter-allied discussions, the Americans were in Paris, like the Allies, to make a victorious, not a negotiated peace. It does not appear to have occurred to the Americans that there was any room for argument, as to whether this statement of the facts was entirely sound, or to find in it anything incongruous with the tenor of the long series of public utterances in Europe which the President was even then concluding at Turin.

The British Radio Station at Lands-End, on January 5th, commented for the benefit of the peoples of the world on the German appeals—"Systematic attempts being made by Germany to exaggerate food shortage; hunger bogey". An American, in a position to speak with much authority, said, with reference to German disorders "The greatest care is necessary so as to have a responsible government to deal with. At the same time, German statesmen must have no hope of gaining the sympathy of the United States by currying favor".

An American journalist, gauging sentiment among the members of the American staff, said, "There is no row over indemnities or assessments of damages against Germany. There is complete accord that Germany must be made to pay to the limit of her capacity."

Any real adherence to the Wilson principles in the American staff had thus already deliquesced under the influence of European solvents. President Wilson, on returning to Paris, would be without the support of an

organization in full understanding and sympathy with his purposes. Notwithstanding the disaffection among his own forces, he held his position for many weeks with much tenacity of purpose.

On his return to Paris, President Wilson desired to proceed at once to the business of peace making. It was the American proposal, first, to form a practical league of nations on, at least, a provisional basis, which might be built about the practical nucleii of inter-allied boards and councils, some of which were already in existence. There would be constituted at once a supernational authority, which would take over the powers of the Supreme War Council. The constitution of this organization would contain, first of all, a definition of principles, few and simple, and not to be applied pedantically. In the light of these principles specific territorial and political issues would be judged.

Lord Robert Cecil and Mr. Balfour arrived some days before President Wilson, and evinced great interest in this program. Three distinct plans for a league of nations were launched; one by Lord Robert Cecil, one by General Smuts, and one by Leon Bourgeois. They contemplated a league which would embrace all nations, and would not establish a balance of power. As a matter of fact, the sudden ending of the war had taken everybody by surprise, and no common plan for a league of nations had been discussed.

After the President's arrival these discussions took a wide field; in them, the question of the approaching renewal of the armistice was merely touched upon, and it was generally agreed that it should be handled pri-

marily as a military matter. In comparison with the great questions which were now occupying his attention, the President regarded it as a detail and of minor importance. The Americans also regarded the Italian boundry issue as settled.

There were now thirty or more delegations in Paris, hundreds of experts and thousands of attachés and members of staffs, each delegation having an entire library. The library of the American delegation was said to contain ten thousand volumes. "Paris" said the Journal des Debats, "is likely to be smothered under the bureaucratic invasion."

Reports reached Paris that on January 5th the German Armistice Commission was strenuously opposing compliance with the provisions of the "protocole financier" attached to the armistice convention of December 14th, which gave the Allies control of German foreign credits; and had also flatly refused to deliver the two-and-a-half million tons of merchant shipping which Foch demanded. The Armistice Commission at Spa on January 9th denied the German request to be permitted to forward food in German coastwise steamers between German ports.

Berlin, at the end of December, became the scene of violent Bolshevist efforts to gain control of the instrumentalities of government. The Europeans all insisted that there was no recognizable government in Germany with which to deal at that time, and their judgment that the actual making of the peace with Germany should be the last subject on the agenda found quite general support among the Americans. An American

"in high executive position" volunteered the prophecy on January 10th that "all Germany within sixty days would be under the military rule of forces commanded by Foch, as elements of disorder were getting the upper hand."[39]

Some sections of the British press at this time manifested impatience at the long delay in the making of the peace which was now foreshadowed, and urged a general peace settlement leaving details until later. "Peace" said the Daily Mail, "could be signed within a

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[39]The political philosophy of the French Ministry which was all about the Americans is reflected in the following summary of editorial opinion in Le Temps from the 1st to the 10th of January:

On January 1 the Temps quotes Clemenceau, "Out of old stones we are pretending to construct an entirely new edifice. It is impossible." To build a new world it would be necessary first to build a new Germany. Where is it? For several weeks of revolution the government has vacillated between anarchy and reaction. For the moment reaction seems to prevail. The consulate of Ebert and Haase is replaced by Ebert and Scheidemann—two heads under the same hat. Thus power has completely escaped the Independent Socialists, i. e., the men who did not await defeat to protest against the war.

After stating that Ditmann and Barth, both dismissed, had been workers for the revolution, and are now replaced by Noske, Wissel and Loebe, all reactionaries, the Temps continues:

"It remains to be seen how the government can live. After the strikes of last week one can see only two solutions—master Berlin or quit Berlin. To master Berlin they must have loyal troops. It is what Frederick William IV did in 1848 and what Ebert is trying to do now. But discipline is lax. Under these conditions can Scheidemann govern Berlin? It appears doubtful. While the German menace remains insoluble you cannot rebuild a new edifice in the world."

Referring to President Wilson's speech at Manchester, the day before, which breathed conciliation, the Temps advocates a settlement "on the only base possible"—permanent friendship among the conquering nations. It again quotes Clemenceau, "There is a system of

month." It was true, but this view was a menace to the purposes of the British Ministry and the Supreme War Council, and was soon silenced by the positive assertion that the state of Germany precluded the recognition of her plenipotentiaries at this time. On January 10th it was falsely reported in Paris that Ebert, Scheidemann and Lansberg had resigned under Bolshevist pressure. This argument, therefore, pre-

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alliances which I do not renounce. I say it plainly. It is my directing thought in the conference."

On January 2 the Temps takes issue with President Wilson's idealism, declaring that bases must be chosen conformable to experience; that true apostles are not dreamers but are realists. The Germans are not fit for a league of nations. Erzberger, famous for his thirty million marks propaganda, has published a book on the league of nations. The Germans all repeat Mr. Wilson's formulas. Kant edited his "Perpetual Peace" at Konigsberg in 1795; it has not fructified yet. Will it do so now? It is but a hypothesis. After so many men have been killed it is not a hypothesis upon which we have the right to found peace. Certainties are necessary. That is what Clemenceau has just said in his speech at the Palais Bourbon. France wants no more invasions: it is a question of frontiers and military preparation. Clemenceau says, "My principal preoccupation, I confess, is not to give trial to too many hopes." Which way! The nation has not forgotten. It judges the future by the past, and wants a peace worthy of victory.

On January 10. "The Scheidemann Government appears to have gained the advantage yesterday. How much and for how long? We shall see. Joffe has sent an insolent message from Moscow, saying he awaits the fall of the Ebert-Scheidemann Government, and will not have to wait long. The Bolshevists are right in expecting its early fall. * * * In November we wanted to separate Russian Bolshevism from German anarchy by a strong Poland. That is not now enough. It is in Germany itself that it is necessary to act. The orderly regions of west and south Germany should be protected from a Liebknecht regime. They should have their own money, customs, railways, public forces. Pensons-y!"

vailed over the suggestion that steps be taken for the conclusion of a quick preliminary peace with Germany.

President Wilson had evinced a desire for official conferences to begin not later than January 9th for the purpose of organization. But, to his disappointment, Lloyd George had not arrived in Paris, having been delayed in England by demobilization problems. He was further delayed by the necessity of reorganizing his Cabinet, and would not arrive before the 12th. Premier Orlando also, it was made known, would have to be in Rome for the opening of Parliament on the 11th. Manifestly preliminary meetings could not be held until the following week. Even nature seemed to conspire to delay the commencement of peace negotiations, for the waters of the rapidly rising Seine almost overflowed the stone embankments of the Quai d'Orsay and threatened to make the Foreign Office inaccessible.

The true reason for delaying a start in the peace making was different from any of these. The Supreme War Council was manoeuvering until the critical moment for renewing the powers of the Armistice Commission for thirty days should arrive on January 12th and be safely passed.

There is a sad instance just here of Old World political finesse which the American observer would like to pass by, but which makes the European methods so obvious that it should not be ignored. A day or two after the President's return to Paris from Italy, when it was clear that, owing to the apparently necessary absence of George and Orlando, no formal steps toward

organization could for the moment be undertaken, Ambassador Jusserand, who had accompanied President Wilson to Europe on the George Washington, suggested that the President utilize the intervening days to make a visit to Belgium and the devastated regions, something which the French public had long desired, and which the French press had persistently suggested that he do. But President Wilson was now unwilling that anything should delay further progress, and declined the invitation.

Whatever motive may be ascribed to Ambassador Jusserand and the European diplomats concerned in this suggestion, the fact remains that had President Wilson accepted the invitation, he would have returned fresh from the inspection of war horrors, no detail of which would have been allowed to escape him, and with a mind more receptive than at any other time to the suggestions of a stern and retributive policy. So distant an excursion as one to Belgium could scarcely have been accomplished, and the return to Paris have been effected, before the 12th. No time for preparation for that momentous meeting would have been afforded, even if the need for preparation had been realized. Indeed some slight contingency or change of plan might have delayed the President's return a day or two. In that case the armistice would have had to be renewed in his absence. The Supreme Council would have acted in his absence, and his endorsement of the proceedings would have been subsequently obtained as a formality, as had been done in the case of the first armistice renewal.

The President, then, remained in Paris. In the next few days there were discussions with Lord Robert Cecil, Balfour, General Smuts and others on the subject of an international police force, the immediate control of war materials, and, collaterally, the spread of Bolshevism and disorders in Europe. President Wilson also discussed Italian interests with Orlando and Sonnino. The following agenda, it appeared at this time, met general approval: First, agreement for creation of a league of nations; second, establishment of new states; third, assessment of indemnities, damages and methods of payment; fourth, conclusion of treaty with Germany. The making of the peace with Germany was to come last, because, it was the consensus of opinion, no stable government was in power there with which to deal. The Spartatists in Berlin were believed to have sixty thousand armed men. Obviously, negotiations with the German government could not be undertaken for some time. Said the British Radio, on January 11th, "Bolshevist agitation spreading in Germany."

There is much confusion in the circumstances surrounding the sitting of the Supreme War Council on Sunday, January 12th. So far as the Americans understood its significance, it was to be the first meeting of the peace conference (Inter-Allied Supreme Peace Council), and the last of the Supreme War Council. They expected to enter at once upon the questions of organization, representation, and procedure. That questions as to the renewal of the armistice would be troublesome at this meeting had not been in their consciousness.

The Europeans had carefully muddied the waters and stirred up the dust for the purpose of surrounding the meeting with an atmosphere of confusion.

The following day the Temps informs us that there were really two meetings at the Quai d' Orsay; that the first was a meeting of the Supreme War Council, and lasted from two-thirty to five-thirty; and that the second was a meeting of the Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers of France, Britain and Italy, and the President and Secretary of State of the United States, and that it examined questions of procedure and organization of the Peace Conference, notably fixing the representation of the small powers.

The first of these two meetings affords the greater interest to the historian. Le Temps gives us some information about it. There were present; for the United States, President Wilson and Secretary Lansing; for France, Clemenceau, Pichon, Clementel, Klotz, Legues, Loucheur; for Britain, Lloyd George and Balfour; for Italy, Orlando and Sonnino. Appearing before the meeting to present the situation were Marshal Foch, Dutasta, Berthelot and General Weygand.

According to the Temps, Marshal Foch read a report on conditions of the execution of the armistice and its breaches by Germany. He examined the situation with regard to Poland and recommended military intervention to check the Bolshevist advance and to stop the fighting between the Poles and the Germans. To that end he urged that two Polish divisions, then in France, under General Haller, should be sent at once to Danzig, and that one American division and one

inter-allied division be dispatched to support them. Military occupation of Germany, alleged to be a prey to Bolshevism was declared essential.

This account by Le Temps does not do justice to the emotional interest of the occasion. President Wilson had fully expected to take practical steps for the organization of a peace conference having power to act. He was expecting to discuss the immediate questions of representation and procedure. Instead, he was offered participation in a vast imperialistic plan for the pacification of Europe by military measures which would involve the use of American troops, and this plan was insistently pressed upon him.

It came as a surprise. He was not prepared with arguments. He sent hastily for General Bliss. But Foch's report was based upon official intelligence, which showed Bolshevism and reaction in Germany, and Bolshevism in the rest of Europe,—both so menacing that military intervention alone could save the situation.

The President did not believe that the picture of internal conditions in Germany, as painted by Foch, was true. He was unalterably opposed to the opening of hostilities against Russia. He believed in conciliation there, and was already contemplating an invitation to be sent the warring factions in Russia to terminate their internecine hostilities. He, therefore, gave expression to his views, clearly and forcefully. He would not be swept off his feet. The colloquoy, thereupon, became rapid, issues became confused. Tempers grew ruffled. Clemenceau and Foch spoke heatedly and with anger. The absence of a common language as a

medium of communication greatly added to the confusion. The questions of fixing the terms upon which the armistice with Germany should be renewed became confused with the general discussion of the military situation. The President was advocating measures of food relief for Germany, and the utilization of two-and-a-half-million tons of merchant shipping in German harbors for this purpose only, at the same moment that Clemenceau and Foch were advocating the seizure of the same shipping because such seizure would cripple Germany's economic recovery. The long meeting ended in confusion and discord. The Supreme War Council had failed to stampede the American President into an agreement for the Napoleonic reconstruction of Europe, but it had had its way with reference to the terms upon which the armistice with Germany should be renewed. The French press, the next day, published the following official communiqué: "Meeting reached agreement as to terms upon which armistice is to be renewed."[40]

An Associated Press dispatch on January 14th illustrates the euphemistic language in which proceedings of this character were announced to the world:

"Marshal Foch, the Allied Commander-in-Chief, is today

[40]The following information was printed in America in an Associated Press report of January 14th:

"An interesting feature of yesterday's meeting, as also of Sunday's, was that more than two hours of the discussion was conducted in French, of which neither President Wilson nor Secretary of State Lansing has a conversational knowledge, and which David Lloyd George, the British Premier, understands to only a limited extent. All the conversations concerning the renewal of the armistice were conducted in French."

on the way to his headquarters at Treves to meet the German delegates and lay down terms for the extension of the armistice.

There was some disposition during yesterday's conference to make the terms of the extension more drastic than had at first been proposed, but this was not carried out.

The extension provides, however, for the turning over of the German commercial fleet to transport troops in exchange for food; for the restitution of material taken from France and Belgium, and for full compliance with the terms of the original armistice".

Immediately following the adjournment of the meeting of the Supreme War Council for the renewal of the armistice, according to Le Temps, the meeting of President Wilson, Secretary Lansing, and the Premiers and Foreign Ministers of France, Britain and Italy, convened for the organization of the Inter-Allied Peace Conference. The session lasted for an hour and resulted in an agreement that its members should constitute a council in whose hands control of the Peace Conference should remain. It should pass and act upon exigent questions, appoint commissions to report on issues of the peace settlement, and authorize the holding, from time to time, of plenary sessions, the scope of whose business it should regulate. Smaller nations were to have representation in its meetings only when their individual interests were involved.

On the next day, Monday the 13th, there was another meeting of the Supreme War Council in which the details involved in the armistice were completed.

The statesmen of Europe were now able to breathe a sigh of relief.[41] The second hurdle in the succession

of armistice renewals had been cleared. Once more the breath of life was breathed into the Armistice Commission, and it could proceed untrammeled for thirty days more in applying the necessary pressure to reduce the morally recalcitrant Germans to submission. The autocratic authority of the Supreme War Council, as Europe's sole governing body, remained unshaken.

Furthermore, control at Paris was now assured by the creation of the new council of heads of state, which would dominate the unwieldly Peace Conference. The situation during the coming month would be much like that in the month just ended. In the language of the thespians, there was to be the "same play." In December while the hard peace was steadily being fitted into the invisible Triangular Framework, the curiosity and interest of the journalists and of public opinion had been satisfied by the varied and changing aspects of President Wilson's journeys in England and Italy. In January and February this same popular interest would be satisfied by descriptions of the varied scene in Paris, heightened by sufficiently frequent plenary sessions, upon which interest would be concentrated and from

[41]A short news item in the London Times on January 13th recalls the activities of the British Imperial War Cabinet to our minds, which, on December 28th, had broken bread with President Wilson, and had agreed perfectly with him upon the principles of the American Peace, some of whose members, also, had signed the Trianon Hotel Pact;

"This morning at eleven, for the first time the Imperial War Cabinet gathered at Paris, at the Hotel Majestic, to consider the results of the first session of the Peace Conference at the Quai d'Orsay yesterday; also representatives of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Transvaal and India."

which would emanate those expressions of lofty political morality which delight the liberal public opinion of the world.[42] By February 14th the real business of the Supreme War Council would be well advanced. There ought to be no great difficulty then in taking the third armistice hurdle.

The German Armistice Commission arrived at Treves, and the armistice convention was prolonged for one month. Commenting upon the proceedings at Treves, and protesting against the continued incarceration of eight hundred thousand German prisoners, the Vorwerts said, "By this armistice they attempt to choke us into unconsciousness".

Definite organization of the new inter-allied council for control of the Peace Conference was achieved on Wednesday, January the 15th, but, instead of being composed of eight members, it was now composed of ten, and was thereafter popularly known as the Council of Ten.

The two new members were the Japanese Ambassadors at London and Paris.

Japan had not signed the armistice: She had not been a party to the compact signed in the Trianon Palace Hotel. She was not morally committed to a peace

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[42]Le Temps, on January 12th, in these guarded words gives the French public some inkling of peace developments:

"Today begin the deliberations from which will come the peace. They at first take the restrained form of an Inter-Allied Council. They will then have the appearance of a plenary conference, conpleted by the discreet work of commissions. The public, in its good sense, will attribute to these distinctions only a relative importance."

of moderation, nor to the principle of a league of nations.

The only practical interest of Japan was in the disposition of German possessions in the east. Her interest in the phychological contest between President Wilson and the Supreme War Council was academic. But, the Supreme War Council saw in Japan an invaluable ally in the contest with President Wilson, as Japan could consistently advocate hard peace terms, and demand a high price for entering a league of nations to which she was not morally committed. From the 15th of January, therefore, the new inter-allied council became the Council of Ten. It would take cognizance of all matters requiring settlement among the allies themselves; the Supreme War Council would continue to handle all matters concerning the enemy nations and the terms of a peace settlement.

Diplomatic secretaries had now an opportunity to become busy, and the formal opening of the Peace Conference in a Plenary Session, to be held on Saturday afternoon, January 18th, in the Salle de La Paix at the Foreign Office, was arranged.

A gathering of delegates and staffs "in commemoration" was held on the 17th. It was in the nature of a social function, and an occasion for felicitations and expressions of good feeling. The atmosphere in which the Peace Conference was to meet was severely democratic. The pomp of other days was banished, as befitted a settlement in which it was understood the principles and methods of democracy should dominate.

But, for one day, the Old World insisted on throw-

ing off its democratic restraint. All the Military and Naval officials in Paris were present, covered with orders and decorations, and wearing their swords. Every civilian having the ribbon of an order wore it. President Poincaré, with the tri-color across his shirt front, presided. Inter-allied harmony was emphasized. It was made plain that the Peace Conference would proceed to the adjustment of mutual interests among the allies, and that the making of the peace with Germany would come last on the agenda. The next day, decorations, side arms and ribbons were permanently put aside, and the atmosphere of democratic simplicity again enveloped Paris.

There were represented at the First Plenary Session thirty-two delegations, with sixty-four delegates present. The correspondents have described the scene and the setting of heavy crimson silken curtains, gorgeous furniture and rich gildings of the Louis XIV period. "No applause, dim light, not a King present. No European present had a title except Sonnino. Poincaré, Wilson, George and Sonnino nominated Clemenceau for permanent chairman. Through all, there was evident a spirit determined upon a peace in which the clash of interests should be subordinated to the harmony of peoples".

Clemenceau, in his speech of acceptance said, "We enter this chamber as friends; we hope to leave it as friends and brothers."

President Poincaré, in his opening speech, had said: "You will, in conformity with the fourteenth of the propositions unanimously adopted by the great allied

powers, establish a general league of nations, which will be the supreme guarantee against any fresh assault upon the rights of peoples."

The League of Nations was by unanimous agreement given first place upon the agenda of the next plenary session, the date for which was not set. Fifteen representatives of the press were present in a connecting room. They were informed of the qualified privileges which would be accorded them at plenary sessions.

The Peace Conference had begun at last. As one intelligent observer said "All is harmony on the surface, and no one is anxious to disturb the accord".

During the week, beginning January 13th, there was a perceptible strengthening of confidence between the American and English delegates, coincident with a condition of constraint which was beginning to grow up between the Americans and the French. Ever since the armistice the British press had speculated, from time to time, upon the American attitude on the question of the freedom of the seas. It had not been without apprehension that this question might become troublesome. But, it was now becoming evident that the President's view upon this subject was not inconsistent with British principles. Under a league of nations, such as the President was working out, in conjunction with Lord Robert Cecil and General Smuts, there would, in time of war, be no neutrals, and it was around the rights of neutrals that the knottiest problems involving the freedom of the seas had always centered.[43] As

[43]The political correspondent of the London Times in Paris cabled his paper on January 15th:

the conception of the league took shape, therefore, the importance of the question of the freedom of the seas lessened, and soon ceased to be a matter of preoccupation in the minds of the British negotiators. Of this drawing together of the Americans and the British one American correspondent wrote; "Wilson's position is immensely stronger than when he arrived. It is now realized that the reading of the phrase 'the freedom of the seas' contains nothing incompatible with British traditions."

The outstanding incident of the three days preceding the formal opening of the Peace Conference on January 18th was "the revolt of the journalists," as they themselves called it. They had been unable to obtain information of what had happened at the meeting of the Supreme War Council on January 12th. They knew the deliberations had been important, but they had not been informed of their nature. The Peace Conference was opening in an environment of secrecy, and they had expected to see "open covenants openly arrived at."

Consequently, on Tuesday, the correspondents presented a memorial to the Council of Ten, setting forth their grievances. It was considered by the Council, and the requests of the journalists denied with no great

"It was not known precisely how far the United States was prepared to jettison its traditions of isolation, and undertake with us the rebuilding of the world. He (President Wilson) has shown beyond doubt that American policy is inspired by the same ideals that brought us, and our allies, through the war. No amount of long-distance diplomacy could have done as much to bridge the Atlantic as Mr. Wilson's presence in Europe for a month."

ceremony. But, the American newspaper men, supported by their British colleagues, refused to let the matter drop. They kept it before the Council on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, and compelled that body to take serious notice of their representations. How rapidly the Supreme War Council was attaining moral dominance over the proceedings of the Peace Conference is proven by the decision reached in this momentous matter. The written decision of the Council of Ten, handed the correspondents at the First Plenary Session, on January 18th, was somewhat lengthy, and informed them that representatives of the press would be admitted only to plenary sessions, and that the Conference reserved the right to hold executive plenary sessions from time to time, at which the press would not be allowed to be present.

The American peace delegates themselves were in favor of a large measure of publicity, but this was flatly opposed by the French. In explanation of the conclusions reached, the journalists were informed that the conversations of great powers were analagous to the meetings of a cabinet, and not to the deliberations of a parliament; that within a nation many things could be given publicity without prejudice to the public welfare, but that in dealings between nations, preliminary discussions must necessarily be in private, although the results of those deliberations could be given broad publicity.[44]

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[44]The reply to the journalists read in part:

"Conversations of great powers are far more analagous to meetings of a Cabinet than to those of a Legislature. Differences among men may be reconciled and agreements reached before the stage of

The decisions taken at this time to restrain publicity of Peace Conference proceedings were of a two-fold nature. They denied the journalists access to the proceedings of the Council of Ten, where all business of importance would be transacted, and imposed upon them a voluntary agreement for secrecy; and they provided a strict censorship over the transmission by cable of press dispatches to the United States.

With great difficulty American correspondents secured the privilege of transmitting dispatches by wireless, but this privilege proved to be of no value, as, at the same time, a strict censorship over the publication of news was maintained by the Secretary of the Navy in the United States itself by complete suppression of wireless dispatches.

In this way it was brought about that the elaborate machine which Mr. George Creel, of the Committee on Public Information, had boasted to Colonel Repington could get the news of one day's proceedings at Paris into every important town in the world within twenty-four hours, remained idle and silent from the

publicity is begun. The essence of democratic government is not that deliberations of government should be conducted in public, but that its conclusions should be subject to the consideration of popular chambers, and to free and open discussion on the platform and in the press. Premature public controversy between parties is serious enough within a state, but it is extremely dangerous to have controversies between nations. * * * Settlement should not only be just but speedy."

The French opposition to publicity in the proceeding is revealed in Le Temps of January 17th:

"Moved by the indiscretions of various journalists, the Five Great Governments have decided to severely restrain the publication of their debates. The censorship will be severe. It will be very embarassing to apply this censorship to the American and English

opening of the Peace Conference until its close. Not a wheel turned; no hand pulled the lever which would have emitted from it a world-wide light of publicity.

Having already created in England and in Italy a public opinion unsympathetic to the American Peace, The Supreme War Council had thus shut off the only avenue through which the President might hope to reach them once more. The French press became inaccessible to the Americans as an agent of publicity in Europe, while remaining entirely responsive to the promptings of the French Government itself, and, what carried with it still more far-reaching consequences, muted cables and antennae would henceforth leave the judgment of a hundred million Americans uninformed by their own agents, and misled by those of the Supreme War Council.

During this week an American mission of military officers was sent to Berlin to investigate political, economic and social conditions in Germany.

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journalists. A conference of the journalists will therefore be called to reach a voluntary understanding. * * * Jules Cambon once said: 'One doesn't carry on a diplomatic conversation as one would buy a cow in market.'"

On the same day the Temps said:

"One is scandalized to learn that an American correspondent was able to telegraph to New York false information, which denied the intentions of President Wilson, and which also denied the moral authority which he is entitled to exercise over his co-citizens. Let us have no party differences. It is not an hour for Byzantine quarrels. Let us not forget the enemy!"

The fallacy in the European position on the question of secrecy in negotiations is that the chief issue involved in the peace was kept secret. Delegates have the right to privacy in negotiation in order to facilitate conclusions on publicly known issues, but not as a means of deceiving entire populations upon questions that are vital to their interests.

CHAPTER VI.

The Peace Conference.

COMPLETE failure for the American Peace, and all that it meant to Europe and the world, was almost sure when the belated organization of an unwieldy congress was effected on January 18th.

Let us recapitulate the measures which Europe had taken to wreck it:

1. The fraudulent British elections, committing the English people to a peace of vengeance, December 14.

2. Delegation to the Armistice Commission December 14 of the Supreme Council's power to negotiate with Germany, placing Germany in the hands of a military commission for thirty days more, or until January 16.

3. Extension of the operation of the Naval Blockade to the German Baltic Coast December 4, legalized by Orders in Council, preventing entrance of sea-borne food supplies.

4. Demonstration to the enemy of apparent participation of the United States in these measures, and diversion of the attention of public opinion from them by receptions to President Wilson in France, England and Italy until January 7.

5. Three weeks of lip-service to the principles of President Wilson, which successfully masked the real purposes of the Supreme War Council.

6. Victory of European will over American will in the meeting of the Supreme War Council in Paris, Janu-

ary 12, where it was determined, against American protest, that the Supreme War Council should continue to dictate the attitude of the Peace Conference to Germany, and hold dealings with the German Government only through a military agency, at least until February 14.

7. Two months pressure of starvation upon the German people, successfully carried out, reducing their morale and will to resist.

8. Creation of a Council of Ten which, under the Supreme War Council, would retain absolute control of the Peace Conference.

9. Complete secrecy attained in the Paris negotiations; muzzling the correspondents; censorship over cables and wireless.

10. Destruction of President Wilson's control over public opinion in England, and in Italy; and his isolation from American support by the censorship upon news.

The European program therefore was well under way when the Peace Conference was officially opened. Perfect teamwork in the contest with the Americans had been made possible in an otherwise discordant camarilla by unity in one great motive—the imposition of a peace of vengeance upon Germany, and the acquisition of vast revenues which might be made to flow from an industrially enslaved state.

This perfect teamwork had been successful in concealing the plot, in preserving good personal relations with the American negotiators, in disarming their suspicions, in affording collateral issues to occupy their

minds, and in preventing the organization of a responsible congress, which would supersede the Supreme War Council in authority, and set itself to the honest task of establishing a peace upon the bases of the Trianon Hotel agreement.

Europe had remained in exclusive control of the war settlement, and, thanks to the Triangular Framework which it had constructed while President Wilson was on the high seas, had been moulding the peace to fit the framework for thirty days without interruption. The meeting of the Supreme War Council on January 12 had settled the issue involving the Triangular Framework. That massive structure survived unshaken. Having been twice approved, it was taking on a certain prescriptive authority. It had been neither demolished nor weakened. Like the ancient comprachicos, the Entente Governments would be able to force whatever new political organism that was growing up within the German borders into a rigid and fantastic mould.

There was no longer much question, therefore, that the Americans would have to permit the Europeans to continue the pressure of the blockade throughout the period in which the Peace Conference sat, and that after several more months of starvation, the German Government, through sheer exhaustion, would have to sign any treaty, no matter what its contents, that might be offered it.

All the bases of the American Peace were now swept away but one. The President still held in Paris that "punitive damages" could not be imposed; that the

honor of the associated governments was involved in the obligation of the contract signed in the Trianon Palace Hotel; and in this matter he had not shifted his ground when the Peace Conference opened on January 18.

This question remained the very essence of the issue between the Entente and America, although it was the one about which the press and public heard least. This it was that made the rigid press, cable and wireless censorship necessary in order that President Wilson should not have the support of public opinion in America. It was the reason of the impenetrable secrecy with which the negotiations of a few men were surrounded. Further eastward, on the banks of the Rhine, the same issue of "punitive damages" was being argued with the courage of desperation by a defenseless people, in a court in which there was no jury, and whose sanction was the power of might alone. The Entente had long ago jettisoned all restraints of moral obligation inherent in the pact of the Trianon Palace Hotel. Their appeal was to the principle which Bethman-Holwegg had once invoked "necessity knows no law." Their adhesion to codes founded upon the laws, pandects and institutes of Justinian was replaced by the philosophy of the Lex Talionis, and under this more ancient standard of moral conduct they did not propose to compromise with the Western Republic.

The period of less than four weeks that ensued, between the opening of the Peace Conferencc on January 18 and the departure of President Wilson for the

United States on February 15, affords an extraordinary example of the resources of disingenuous European statecraft.

There is a limitless welter of issues, all of burning importance, all pressing for immediate solution (except those concerning Germany), discussions proceeding in a halting way because there is divergence as to the principles which shall form the basis of settlement. The Americans insist upon the establishment of a league of nations first; then concrete decisions can be made in accordance with principle. The Europeans are willing to applaud principle, but purpose to make settlements on the basis of expediency. Not for an instant do they consider binding themselves under the principles of a Wilson League until the Wilson peace with Germany is renounced and the Entente Peace accepted. After this is accomplished they will be willing to adhere to a league of nations, for a league of nations superimposed upon the Entente Peace will meet the full approval of the Supreme War Council.

These four weeks, therefore, are a period of deadlock, of advance and retreat, of forced manifestations of personal harmony, of suppressed irritations, increasing indirection, growing intrigue and unrelenting pressure; of vain efforts to reconcile essentially hostile ideas. Both contestants have the determination to prevail, but the struggle is unequal, for President Wilson, with no organization behind him, knowing his purposes and trained to further them, faces alone a camarilla of Europe's ablest, united in will, politically unscrupulous, and supported by perfectly trained staffs,

which furnish them without effort every weapon and resource the use of which may be demanded by the exigencies of negotiation.

Through the fog of secrecy which settled over diplomatic Paris the real purposes of all but the American President were only obscurely disclosed. The Peace Conference appeared to open with President Wilson on the offensive, demanding the immediate creation of a league of nations, and the subsequent settlement of issues in accordance with its principles, the Europeans being on the defensive. Before the 14th of February it was being made clear that every single principle to be incorporated in the covenant of the League of Nations must be obtained by a substantial concession to the spirit of the Entente Peace. Before the 14th of February the offensive shifted to the Europeans, who never lost it again until the Entente Peace was signed in June.

After the first Plenary Session the daily meetings of the Council of Ten were crowded with discussions of territorial disputes, which the exigencies of the moment thrust forward. The menace of bolshevist invasion in Poland, Roumania and Hungary was imminent. The French continued to advocate the military invasion of Russia, or at least to give military assistance to the border populations that were non-bolshevist. President Wilson advocated a policy of conciliation, and proposed that the warring elements in Russia be invited to send delegates to a conference. The French press was greatly scandalized by this suggestion.

The Jugoslavs, quietly supported by the French, were keeping the Adriatic issue in the foreground, and President Wilson, by reason of his definite stand against the Italian claims, was deeply involved in a controversy with one of the allied nations. Poland was fighting the Bolshevists on one side and the Germans on the other. The French were for the instant dispatch of American and allied troops to its assistance. The President wanted a commission of investigation sent. The French considered the Polish Executive Committee, which had appointed Ignace Paderewski as Premier, to be the element properly in control of Poland; the President believed that the Polish Executive Committee represented imperialistic elements, and favored support of General Pilsudski, whom the French regarded as socialistic.

Hostilities broke out between the Czecho-Slovaks and the Poles over control of the coal lands of Teschen. The Czecho-Slovaks on the north of Hungary, the Roumanians on the east and the Jugoslavs on the south, impatient of restraining advice from Paris, were fixing their own boundaries, not without violence, at Hungary's expense.

There was always talk of occupation of German territory by the French as guarantees. It was incessant in the press and in the conversation of hotel corridors.

President Wilson held continuous informal meetings with Lord Robert Cecil, General Smuts and Leon Bourgeois, and out of these meetings grew the plan for the covenant of the League of Nations. The prin-

ciple was soon established that some nations were to be excluded.

When the involved political philosophy dominating these meetings reached this point, Lord Robert Cecil announced for publication in the French press, that "German Austria, Bulgaria and Turkey could not be admitted to the League of Nations at present, nor until they had become trustworthy nations".

Thus the important principle was established in the Conference that some nations were trustworthy and some were not. The Conference was taking cognizance of this as a political phenomenon. This fantastic pronouncement having been adopted as a rule of action; having put a common cliché upon German Austria, Bulgaria and Turkey, the approach to the discussion as to Germany was facilitated. If German Austria was untrustworthy, how much more true this must be of Germany! The generalities of an earlier day were not to be allowed to stand in President Wilson's way. Untrustworthy nations manifestly must be treated as such, and excluded from fellowship in a league of moral nations. It was in this way that the United States reached agreement with the Entente Governments that Germany should be excluded from the League.

President Wilson's original purpose had been to stay but a short time in Europe. His determination to return to Europe to see the Paris proceedings through was made a few days after the meeting of the Supreme War Council on January 12 for the renewal of the armistice. It was stated that this intention should not be interpreted to mean that serious differences had de-

veloped among the delegates, but that the magnitude and complexity of many questions had been unforeseen in mapping out the original program. There had been many unavoidable delays.

The immense financial considerations involved in such a peace settlement as that at Paris, which under different circumstances would have been by no means primarily a matter of intrigue, began inevitably to work themselves into the discussions of the Council of Ten. It was to this phase of the peace settlement that is attributable all of the disingenuous and insincere characteristics which marked the general proceedings. Financial considerations were of the very essence of the Entente Peace, and that Peace could not be consummated until agreement was had upon them.

There are few evidences of conversations between the Europeans and the Americans on European finances at any period before the 20th of January. Then, in connection with President Wilson's suggestion of a peaceable working agreement with the Bolsheviki, the fact developed that the French held Russian Czarist bonds to the value of thirty-seven billion francs which it was the unmistakable intent and purpose of the Soviet Government to repudiate. It was a primary purpose of the French to protect this claim.

The financial advisers whom President Wilson had chosen to aid him at Paris were Messrs. Baruch, Hurley, Lamont, Davis and McCormick. About the 20th of January a conference was held with Messrs. Baruch, Hurley and McCormick at Colonel House's apartment. These advisors were primarily financiers and not states-

men, and they proved to be a broken reed upon which the President had to lean.

A week passed crowded with great and ever-growing perplexities. The Council of Ten considered the existing Danube and Rhine conventions, and agreed upon plans for extending their provisions to the Vistula, Pruth, Elbe and Scheldt. (To regulate the Elbe in German territory was a decidedly advanced step in the principles of international law.)

The claims of the Hedjaz, and the Anglo-French secret treaties, came up for discussion. Before the week was over the French were making open demands for special settlements. The French Colonial Party boldly demanded of Clemenceau that France be given the Saar Valley and more extended rights in Syria. There was much agitation, supported by Foch, for permanent occupation of the left bank of the Rhine.

Not to be outdone in patriotism by the French Colonial Party, the French Franco-Slav Society made it known that Italy ought not to have Dalmatia or Fiume.

These territorial controversies were thrust into greater prominence than the League of Nations. It seemed doubtful indeed whether there would be any league of nations at all unless progress were made in settling them.[45] They prevented discussion of the Covenant in the Council of Ten, but Cecil and Smuts,

[45]"The fundamental vice of the method of work adopted by the Conference is plain to all eyes, in the decisions taken yesterday, on the subjects of Poland and Russia. These decisions are, to start inquiries. For two and one-half months, since the armistice was signed, the governments have not been able to form an opinion on Poland and Russia. If they are not better edified upon the other countries

in consultation with President Wilson, were making considerable progress. They were effecting the necessary compromises between the Hotel Crillon and the Quai d'Orsay, which would make the final adoption of the hard peace possible in accordance with the wishes of Europe, and of a league of nations, not inconsistent with it, in accordance with the wishes of the Americans.

Toward the end of the week the Americans and the English grew perceptibly still nearer together, and both became decidedly cool to the French policies. As the French attitude grew progressively more indifferent to the League of Nations, the English grew warmer in its support. The Japanese delegates had not yet expressed themselves, but through English channels it was informally understood that the Japanese were favorable.

The Second Plenary Session of the Conference was held on Saturday, January 25th. It was again devoted to the expression of lofty aspirations, and to the promise of new and better things. The appointment of five commissions was announced as follows:[46]

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whose lot they must regulate, the preliminaries of peace will not be signed for many months. In November they spoke of February, now they speak of June. * * *

"Under these conditions but one resource remains for us: that of imposing on Germany, at each monthly renewal of the armistice of November 11, supplementary conditions which procure for the allies certain advantages they are expecting from the preliminaries."—Journal de Debats, January 24.

[46]In appointing the League of Nations Commission it was announced that; (a) It is essential to create a League of Nations (b) The League part of the Treaty of Peace shall be open to all civilized nations which may be trusted to favor its designs; (c) It shall have a permanent organization for periodic international conferences.

1. League of Nations Commission.
2. Commission on Responsibility for the War.
3. Commission on Reparation for Damages.
4. Commission on Labor Legislation.
5. Commission on Transportation, Waterways, etc.

Felicitous speeches were again made by President Wilson, Lloyd George and Orlando. Once more President Wilson sought to urge upon the delegates the necessity of consulting the general welfare and the general wishes. "We represent peoples," he said, "not merely governments. It is necessary to satisfy the opinion of mankind. The select classes are no longer the governors of mankind." In December these statements had had the grave attention of the Supreme War Council; on the 25th of January such considerations no longer had weight in the minds of negotiators, who were securely entrenched behind the wall of a world-wide censorship.

The Reparations Commission was directed to fix the amount the Central Empires ought to pay, the amount they are capable of paying, and the method, form and time.

A sub-committee on Violation of the Laws of War was to determine the responsibility of its authors, their degree of responsibility, suggest a tribunal to judge crimes, etc.

Its membership was as follows:

For United States: Lansing and Miller.

For Britain: Sir Edward Hewart and another.

For France: Tardieu and Larnaude.

For Italy: Scialoja and Raimondo.

It met February 3 at 3 p. m. at Ministry of Interior. Tardieu opened the session, stating that the first steps were to get the facts, take testimony of the victims, establish responsibility, culpability, premeditation, violation of treaties, violations of the rights of peoples and the laws of war, and to fix responsibility and the rules by which the sanctions were to be applied. Proposed Lansing for President.

The President's speech went unnoticed in the French press. The fact that he had not spoken directly of France and her sufferings in the war was noted. Lloyd George and Orlando had both taken occasion to do so, and both were accorded friendly comment in the press. The nearest devastated regions lay only thirty miles away from the Quai d'Orsay, and the French never ceased to comment until the President made a visit to Rheims to see them.

Before the Second Plenary Session was over, it suddenly passed from the contemplation of philosophic principles of political harmony to an exhibition of honest national selfishness and greed. No sooner had the creation of a Commission on Reparations been announced, than the representatives of state after state arose to request representation upon it. One observer describes the scene as follows:

"The minds of the small nations concentrated on the amount of tribute possible to collect from the Central Powers, and upon nothing else. One spokesman after another came forward with demands for representation on the Commission to determine Reparations. They were mildly interested in other problems, but were vitally interested in that body, and said so.

The size of the bill will stagger the imagination. Only magic or a miracle can satisfy the demands. Canada, Australia, Poland, Belgium, China, Serbia, Greece, Venezuela, Portugal, Czecho-Slovakia, Brazil, Roumania and Siam, all wanted representation.

"Clemenceau put an end to the discussion by making it plain that it was the great nations that had fought the war and had won the war; that if they had so chosen they could have made a peace without undertaking the formation of a league of

nations, and in which other nations would not be represented; and that other nations would be given such representation on the Reparations Commission as the great nations saw fit." [47]

This was the only attempt of the nations to throw off the yoke fastened upon them by the Five-Power control of the Conference.[48] It had been in contemplation to give to nineteen nations, other than the Great Powers, five places upon the Reparations Commission, where the Great Powers were represented by ten places. Within a few days, however, Belgium, Servia, Greece, Poland and China, upon combining in protest, were accorded special representation, but not in a way to jeopardize Five-Power control of the Conference.

After the appointment of five important commissions at the Second Plenary Session, some of the confusion in the Council of Ten was reduced, and the President felt that he would now be able to sail for the United States knowing that the work in Paris was progressing.

The Second Plenary Session, by appointing a Reparations Commission, brought the question of reparations (and consequently of punitive damages) momentarily into the light of day—momentarily, because the pro-

[47] Clemenceau, avoc beaucoup de tact, de fermeté et de verve, brought out these facts: that the role of the "Bureau" of the Conference was to make the peace; that the allies at the end of the war had twelve million soldiers. C'est un titre; We had the losses, and if we did not have the great question of a league of nations before us, we might consult only ourselves. It was our right. Then the vote was taken by a show of hands.—(Paris Temps.)

[48] "Uniting in great pomp the representatives of a multitude of powers to be told they will be admitted to be heard only á titre consultatif."

ceedings of that commission were instantly shrouded in the deepest mystery. Pari passu with the creation of the Reparations Commission, the League of Nations Commission was permitted to take concrete form.

The only remaining hazard which the Supreme War Council faced in planning the consummation of the Entente Peace was that involved in the organization and control of the Commission on Reparations, and in keeping its proceedings secret. In the scheme of things which the Supreme War Council had devised this Commission was the core. In comparison all else was husks and rubbish. When the Second Plenary Session, sitting in the light of day, created this body, a certain critical point in well laid plans had been reached; there was now a visible, tangible official body, whose function was to determine how much Germany ought to pay, and how much Germany was capable of paying—a body which must construe and interpret the meaning of the pact of the Trianon Palace Hotel.

The entire Entente Peace, the Triangular Framework; the long steps already successfully taken by the Armistice Commission; the work of the food blockade in depressing German civilian morale; all would be jeopardized if the Reparations Commission took the wrong view of "reparations". The Reparations Commission was not officially organized until February 3. Its proceedings from February 3 to February 14 will be adverted to later in this chapter.

After the Plenary Session of the 25th, the Council of Ten resumed its daily sittings. In informal conversations the great powers were coming to be spoken of

as the "Big Five," Belgium, Poland, Greece, Servia and China as the "Little Five," and sometimes all nations except the Big Five were spoken of as the "little nations." The Council of Ten was becoming a sort of court for hearing the controversies between the little nations. It listened gravely and made few decisions; the judges were not yet in harmony as to the juridical standards which should be applied.

The abolition of conscription, economic reconstruction, credits in order to start industrial activity, and other important matters of general and common interest found their way into the discussions only to be thrust aside by some territorial controversy which, in turn, received only tentative treatment. Exigent matters continued to be acted up by the Supreme War Council.

In the week following the Second Plenary Session, the distribution of the German colonies (agreement having already been reached that they no longer belonged to Germany) was thrust into the foreground for decision. President Wilson flatly refused to consent to a division of the Pacific Islands between Britain and Japan under the mere right of conquest; it would be a fatal blow to the principles of the League of Nations and the right of self-determination. At the same time the Japanese, who a week before were informally understood to favor the League of Nations, let it be known that their adhesion to the League depended upon the dispositions made in the Pacific. The English remained ostentatiously in sympathy with the American viewpoint.

The ingenuity of the members of the League of Nations Commission (who had carefully avoided as yet the formal organization of that body) found the way out of the impasse. The theory of mandates was evolved under which an allied state already in possession of a German colony would retain possession of it as a mandatory, holding it under a tenure of "permanent trust," with supervisory authority in the League of Nations. This permitted the immediate distribution of German colonies among the allies in the same proportion as to territory as would have been made under the principle of the right of conquest.

The Anglo-American understanding grew closer each day. In the vexatious matter of secret treaties, English magnanimity suggested to the Americans that Britain's position would not be unreasonable with reference to the secret treaty with Roumania, the Pact of London and the Anglo-French convention concerning Syria. The English were in accord with the American negotiators in the opinion that the Covenant of the League of Nations should be adopted first, and that concrete settlements should be made afterwards in accordance with its principles. Manifestly the opposition which President Wilson was encountering was coming from other than English sources. "An unwritten Anglo-American entente was taking form under which California would assuredly be safe."

Late in January the Poles and Czecho-Slovaks, for both of which states the associated nations had done so much, were in open hostilities for possession of the coal lands of Teschen. It was extremely trying for

the negotiators at Paris, especially those who advocated the reduction of military forces, and Teschen was only one of Europe's sore spots. Wireless warnings were sent against anticipations of decisions to be made at Paris.

The Bolsheviki continued to push westward, the Italians and Jugoslavs remained at the point of hostilities, and in Paris Orlando, Cellere and Diaz, in monotonous unison, were demanding that Fiume remain Italian. The Germans and Poles were fighting in West Prussia; Montenegro was bitterly resisting inclusion in the Servian state, Roumanian armies were invading Hungary, and the Ukrainians were defending themselves against the Bolsheviki.

Agitation in the French press for the annexation of the Saar Valley and for occupation of the left bank of the Rhine was increasing. Apprehensions concerning the German menace were breathed from the pages of every journal; the imminent union of Germany and Austria must be prevented; Germany was recovering by leaps and bounds. Japanese and Chinese delegates were arguing heatedly over Shantung.

Under these circumstances the organization and initial activities of the Reparations Commission became only one of many subjects to divide the attention of the negotiators. In the swiftly flowing tide of Peace Conference activities this significant decision had been reached by February first—that the Reparations Commission should proceed with its work without waiting for the organization of the League of Nations. It proceeded to organize at once, and never afterwards

was made a part of or connected in any way with the League of Nations. Its initial meeting was held on February 3 at the French Ministry of Finance. Louis Klotz, Minister of the French Treasury, was elected president, and Premier Hughes of Australia Vice-President.[49] The secretariat comprised Mr. J. D. Greene of the United States, Colonel Peele of England, Monsieur Lasteyrie of France and Signor Foberti of Italy.

During its early meetings written memoranda setting forth the views of the respective governments on the question of reparations were filed with the secretariat.

Beginning with the fourth meeting the issue became clearly drawn between the Americans on the one hand and the representatives of the European Governments on the other. It was gravely argued in a legal manner. Mr. Hughes outlined the position of the British Government, which was clearly understood to be that of the French and Italians.

At the Fifth Meeting the American position was set forth by Mr. J. F. Dulles; and Lord Sumner of the British Empire replied at length.

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[49] "At the first meeting of the Reparations Commission, M. Klotz was elected President. He said, 'Merci, au travail, pour la justice, voila notre program.' "—(Paris Temps.)

Its other members were:

For United States: Baruch, Davis, McCormick.

For Britain: Hughes, Simons, Lord Cunliffe, (a Director of the Bank of England).

For France: Klotz, Loucheur, Lebrun.

For Italy: Salandra, d'Ameglio, Chiesa.

For Japan: Moki, Majapka, Frikin.

At the Sixth Meeting, which was held on February 14, (the day President Wilson left Paris for America) Mr. Dulles finished his argument, and Mr. Hughes replied.

The sole question argued during these three meetings was whether the Fourteen Points and other addresses of President Wilson, and their acceptance by the associated Governments and Germany, constituted a limitation on the extent of reparations or compensation which the Associated Governments might demand in the final terms of peace.

The American delegates held that the extent of reparations was so limited by the agreement of November 1918 with Germany (the Trianon Hotel Pact); the British delegates took the opposite view.[50]

The League of Nations Commission held its first official meeting on January 31 at the Hotel Crillon. It was participated in by President Wilson, Colonel House, Lord Robert Cecil and General Smuts. The six other members representing France, Italy and Japan, were Bourgeois, Larnaude, Orlando, Scialoja, Chinda and Otchiai; they appear to have taken a less active interest in its proceedings.

The major decisions which the Treaty of Versailles embodies took practical form and became concrete during these last ten days of the President's first sojourn

[50]With reference to German indemnities it was now of common report in the ante-rooms and hotel corridors that the total allied bill would be an amount "sufficient to make all Germany realize the futility of militarism" (The Reparations Commission was at work). To the Americans the sums talked of seemed staggering, but there was nothing tangible for general or public discussion.

in Europe. The agreement to take Germany's colonies over bodily was reached. Under the principle of "permanent trust" France was to take Togoland and the Cameroons, Japan the Caroline and Marshall Islands and to remain in occupation of Shantung with control of its railroad; Australia, New Guinea; the South African Union, German Southwest Africa. Britain was to have the mandate over Mesopotamia. France would probably have Constantinople, as the Turk manifested hostility to the British. There was to be a Kingdom of the Hedjaz, in which much of Syria would be included. Armenia was urged upon the United States but not definitely accepted.

The proportionate distribution of vast territories had thus been tentatively agreed upon, and it was possible to bring the settlements within the purview of a league covenant. Its clauses now rapidly took form, and by working day and night a draft of the Covenant was finished early in the morning of February 14, in time to be read at the Plenary Session arranged to be held that afternoon, at which session President Wilson hoped to have the Covenant formally adopted by the Peace Conference.

When the Plenary Session convened it appears that all the governments represented were willing to sign the covenant except France. Clemenceau refused. It was stated that France was unwilling to become a party to it because there was no international army or police force provided for to guarantee the safety of the member states.

The bearing of the proceedings in the Commission on

Reparations which have been set forth above upon the action of the French Government in refusing adhesion to the League of Nations is entirely obvious. In the meetings of the Reparations Commission the issue as to the significance of the Trianon Hotel Pact had been clearly met and decided against the Americans. But before the Reparations Commission could proceed its decision must be approved by the Council of Ten, where decisions if made at all must be unanimous. Here President Wilson refused to participate in a decision which denied the obligation of the Trianon Hotel Pact. Simultaneously Clemenceau refused for France adherence to the Covenant of the League of Nations.

If at this time the American delegates had brought themselves to the point of joining in the repudiation of the Trianon Hotel Pact, and accepting the decisions of the Reparations Commission there is no possible doubt that the Covenant of the League of Nations would have been unanimously adopted at the Plenary Session of February 14th. What effect the unanimous adoption of the Covenant of the League at this early date might have had upon subsequent history is a matter of interesting speculation.

Up to the moment when the Plenary Session of February 14 was held, however, America and Europe remained in profound disagreement upon the one vital issue of the Peace Conference, and President Wilson sailed the next day, bearing with him a draft of a covenant which had been given no validity or legal significance whatever.[51]

[51]The Reparations Commission proceeded exactly as it would have

One other event (recurring with the regularity of the astronomical procession), action upon which could not be displaced, no matter how numerous and pressing the issues before the negotiators, was the renewal of the armistice, which must be signed by the Germans again on February 14.

The Supreme War Council took up the question on February 10th in the midst of a veritable frenzy of apprehension in French public opinion, artfully stimulated by the government, over the German menace and of demands for the neutralization of the left bank of the Rhine.[52]

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done had there been unanimous repudiation of the Trianon Hotel Pact. On February 5 it had appointed three sub-committees as follows:

1. Evaluation of Damages.
2. Capacity to Pay.
3. Means of Payment, measures of control, guarantees.

[52]The program of the meeting of the Supreme War Council for renewal of the armistice, February 10 was:

1. Occupation of German territories.
2. Occupation of Turkish Asia.
3. Renewal of armistice;
   Right bank of Rhine.
   Execution of clauses previously signed.
   Action in case of German refusal.
4. Execution of Naval armistice; submarines.
5. Food for Poland.—(Paris Temps.)

Journal des Debats, Feb. 14:

"Bon gré, mal gré, the Supreme War Council had to adopt the only combination which remained open until the signing of preliminaries. It had to insert in the armistice convention essential clauses which normally would figure in the preliminaries of peace, and of which the execution could not be put off longer without danger.

They therefore decided yesterday to demand the immediate execu-

For days there had been veiled and open criticism of the English and of President Wilson, with whispered accusations of pro-Germanism. So offensive had the inuendo and gossip become, and so dangerous to the progress of negotiations, that the Americans and English began to confer upon the advisability of moving the conference to some other place than Paris.

The meeting of the Supreme War Council for the renewal of the armistice opened with plain speaking and a clear-cut statement of issues. The French stated the allied terms, which they proposed be included in an extension of the armistice. They avowed their determination that German industry should be throttled in order that their own might not be subjected to its compe-

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tion of a certain number of conditions, and have authorized Foch to summon the German commissioners to Treves to accept this sort of ultimatum with a very short delay. The Supreme Council does not publish today the conditions arrived at yesterday but we know they are in three categories:

1. Executing the clauses of November 11 and the two renewals.
2. Poland, the frontier of 1772.
3. Military conditions, complete disarmament.

"Nous appliqueront dans l'execution de l'oeuvre de reparations les methodes rigoreusement scientifiques qu'ils ont employeés pour leur oeuvre de destruction."—Gauvain.

In response to President Wilson's demands a civilian commission was appointed to be present at the renewal of the armistice with the Germans. It had no powers except to observe and to report to the Supreme Economic Council. Its members for the United States were Norman Davis and General Bliss. The Supreme Economic Council was created February 8.

Foch, Petain, Haig, Diaz and Pershing were present at the meeting of the Supreme War Council February 13.

tition. The President had no sympathy with this position.

On the contrary he demanded that the authority of General Foch and the Armistice Commission be superceded by the civilian authority of the Peace Conference, and that the blockade be lifted to permit food supplies to enter Germany.

These demands were met by a storm of indignation. Again Clemenceau and Wilson were plunged in fiery verbal war. (Lloyd George was not present at this meeting having been conveniently recalled to England on account of domestic questions. Britain was represented by Balfour.)[53] The debate continued on succeeding days. The French would not agree to the lifting of the blockade—if it were lifted the other allies had ships with which to resume commerce and France had not; Germany ought to be held back until France was on her feet. On the day following the last debate the French press was censored.

It is said that Marshal Foch was bold enough to repeat his assertion of a month before, that Germany had an army of three million men, and that it was necessary to occupy Essen and the Krupp works; that for military reasons power should not be withdrawn from the Armistice Commission, and that in the final terms of peace France should have the Rhineland, German coal and an enormous indemnity.

[53]On February 13 Lloyd George revealed in the Commons the enormous victory which the European negotiators conceived they had already won:

"The German colonies will not be returned (applause). We have also clearly indicated that 'reparations' comprise 'indemnities.'"

The discussion continued until February 12 when the Supreme War Council renewed the armistice for an indefinite period, and with concessions so broad to be signed by the German Armistice commission as to cover those financial provisions which were afterwards written into the Treaty of Versailles. (These decisions greatly facilitated the efforts of the Reparations Commission to arrive at the principle under which the word "reparation" was to be construed.)

The new armistice convention was signed by the Germans on February 17 at the point of allied bayonets;[54] the Armistice Commission continued to supervise the execution of the convention; the Blocade continued to exclude food cargoes and fishing-boats from German ports. The Triangular Framework of the Entente Peace had successfully withstood the second and last assault that was destined to be made upon it. It remained thereafter invulnerable, and stood triumphantly until the 28th of June when the extorted signatures were affixed to the Treaty of Versailles.

American intelligence officers returning from Germany had reported that Ebert, Scheidemann and Noske were striving honestly to perfect an organization capable of giving Germany real democratic government, and that the masses of the German people recognized defeat. Germany had become a legally organized republic on February 9, and the National Assembly, sitting at Weimar, had adopted the constitution on February 11. The terms of armistice, as drawn by the

[54]Erzberger received two sharply worded notes—one from Paris and one from London. They demanded cessation of hostilities with the Poles.

Supreme War Council, were presented to the National Assembly for immediate ratification. They caused consternation and dismay. When it was suggested that President Wilson could not have given his assent to them, the delegates were informed that he had been present when they were drawn up, and had approved of them. The last hope of a moderate peace was gone. Germany was surrounded by an iron ring which would not be relaxed until the bond was signed.

It is necessary to advert once more, before closing this chapter, to the state of public opinion in Europe with reference to the principles which President Wilson had brought to Europe with him.

After the meeting for the renewal of the armistice on January 12th, the good-will which French opinion had theretofore manifested rapidly cooled. The French Government knew that President Wilson's purposes were in fundamental antagonism to its own. As the breach widened, it permitted the press to reflect its own irritation, and this irritation in turn was communicated to French public opinion. The invitation to the warring factions in Russia for a conference on Prinkipo, insisted on by President Wilson, over the bitter opposition of Pichon, seemed to the French to be a step in the direction of the recognition of a regime which threatened to repudiate the French claims of thirty-seven billion francs against the Czarist Government.[55] The President had vetoed Marshal Foch's

[55]Lloyd George, through Reuters agency disavowed responsibility for the Prinkipo invitation. He had only suggested, he said, that representatives of all sections of Russian public opinion should come to Paris.

plan for the military occupation of Germany. He was opposing the just claims of the French for reparations. All these things became known to French public opinion, and it became bitterly hostile. The Franco-Slav society let it be publicly known that it did not approve of a league of nations. Franklin Bouillon and André Cheradame, the publicist, were said to be seeking a liaison with the political opposition now voicing itself in the American Senate. The brilliant political journalists who were at their best only when their pens were dripping gall, were beginning to speak of Mr. Wilson as a party leader, not a President. There were whispered accusations of pro-Germanism.[56]

When President Wilson sailed, government propaganda among the French people, through the instrumentality of the French press, had done its work. The plain people, upon whom the President had counted, had failed him. Public opinion in France regarded President Wilson as an impractical idealist, a Fourteenth Century dreamer, and believed him to be what was inexpressibly shocking to French consciousness—

[56]The crow of the Gallic cock at this time was at its shrillest. The following lines illustrate its mood:

"The allied countries should cease encouraging public and private excitations against France. French public opinion is calm and patient. But it will not tolerate that responsibilities be shirked nor that the atmosphere of the Conference be poisoned with asphixiating gasses emprunté in the German arsenal."

Auguste Gauvain, Journal de Debats, February, 6.

Feb. 17. "Des nuages à dissiper. We don't like the utterances of the World, the Times, the Washington Post; they accuse us of retarding the peace. They serve the interests of the enemy like all the propaganda to bring about division among us."

pro-German. One American newspaper man summed up this sentiment: "Two months ago Wilson could have been elected President of France—today he could not be elected a justice of the peace."

This reversal of sentiment in France presents the same political phenomenon which marked the overthrow of President Wilson as a leader of public opinion in Italy. In both instances a great moral leader, but an alien, had voiced the wishes of liberal and progressive elements everywhere, and quickened the hope that a formula had been found under which the acerbity of international misunderstanding would be assuaged, and international settlements reached in the spirit of true fraternity. In both instances this new leadership quickly demanded the sacrifice of cherished national aspirations of a kind which neither people was willing to give up, and in both instances reactionary chancelleries availed themselves of the opportunity to poison the minds of the people with the belief that protestation of liberal principles was only a veil which covered real hostility to their national welfare.

In England popular sentiment is not so mercurial as among the Latin peoples and, except in times of national exhaustion, has to be reckoned with. English popular decisions when once made, bear some analogy to the grip of the British bull-dog. Such seemed to be the character of the decision to which the Ministry had committed English opinion while the George Washington was steaming eastward. The presence of Mr. Wilson in England at a later date, therefore, could not disturb the equanimity of the members of the Privy

Council, assured as they were that English public opinion was with them and not with President Wilson. On this point they could relax mental tension, while they observed with interest the wizardry by which the Quai d'Orsay and the Consulta exorcised the Pied Piper, whose music was luring the children of public opinion from them.

The last forty-eight hours of that period of the peace negotiations in Paris, which ended with President Wilson's departure for the United States on February 14, have that significance which the following concatenation of circumstances seems to give:

1. The Supreme War Council renewed the armistice, extending the life of the Armistice Commission until the Treaty should be signed, and giving it unlimited power of oppression.

2. The Reparations Commission overwhelmingly voted that the Trianon Hotel Pact did not constitute a limitation upon the right of the allies to impose indemnities. The American members disagreed.

3. The League of Nations Covenant was read in the Plenary Session of February 14. No action was taken and it was not adopted.

CHAPTER VII

Germany.

BEFORE proceeding with the evolution of the Peace Treaty, it is advisable to inquire into the political and social developments which were taking place in Germany, behind the thick veil of secrecy which the Armistice Commission and the Naval Blockade maintained.

It must not be forgotten that what transpired within the boundaries of that nation was interpreted to the peoples of the Entente and of the United States by agencies whose channel of communication with Germany passed through the Armistice Commission and the Naval Blockade Commission. Cables to America were controlled by the associated governments, and naval censorship on wireless messages was complete.

At Paris, information of a most circumstantial and voluminous character came continuously to President Wilson and the Americans, but nearly all of that which was pressed on President Wilson's attention came through the intelligence agencies of the Entente governments. The American intelligence service was far more trustworthy; it brought reports which represented conditions correctly, but its personnel was small, and its voice was not listened to at Paris, when the far more voluminous reports of the Entente agents, of a different tenor, corroborated each other completely. In December, January and February everything indicates that the official American view of developments in Germany was founded almost entirely upon the representation

of events and their meaning received through Entente channels.

Press reports in America were, of course, subject to the same influences. During the winter of 1918-19, the information concerning Germany given to the American people was colored to suit the purposes of the Supreme War Council, and was not of a character to further the purposes of the American Peace.

Hence, today, Americans see in retrospect a Germany during that winter, unrepentant, vengeful, treacherous and dangerous. During that winter the French and British propaganda, directed to the dissemination of this belief in America, was more active and determined than it had been during the war. Little respect was paid to the historical verities, and it is quite generally believed in America today that a German revolution in October and November caused a military collapse, which resulted in unconditional surrender, and that in the imposition of a very hard peace the associated governments were performing an act of retributive justice.

It has been set forth in Chapter III that the war, as a matter of fact, ended in a compromise agreement, providing for limited indemnities, and a peace of moderation compatable with German national honor. The agreement reached in the Trianon Palace Hotel on November 4th fixed irrevocably the terms and the standard of obligations that must govern both sides.

A study of developments in Germany following the armistice discloses the honest conviction that the mutual rights and obligations growing out of the peace must

be based upon the agreement concluded at the Trianon Palace Hotel.

Before the armistice was signed, all authority in Germany was relinquished by the Imperial Government to a cabinet of Peoples' Commissioners, headed by Friederich Ebert, and representing the Majority Socialists in the Reichstag. The Majority Socialists were democratic in their principles and moderate in their tendencies. The Independent Socialists, a smaller group, were radical, and tended toward Bolshevist action. The Spartacists, after the armistice, led by Leibnecht, were indistinguishable in their principles from the Bolshevists of Russia, and sought to oust the Majority Socialists from power by methods of violence. They undertook to institute at once a reign of terror in Berlin, and, by seizing the agencies and instrumentalities of government, to paralyze the efforts of the Majority Socialists to call a constitutional convention and to maintain public order; and in the resulting chaos to establish the authority of the proletariat.

Outside of Berlin simultaneous movements by Spartacists took place at the sea-ports, where sailors on many ships mutinied and joined the Spartacist cause, and in the industrial regions of Westphalia, Essen, Silesia and other places. Municipal agencies and police headquarters were seized, and the red flag raised. Everywhere the people had the opportunity to establish and support a permanent soviet regime if such were their inclination.

The first Socialist cabinet consisted of Friederich

Ebert, Hugo Haase for foreign affairs, Philip Scheidemann for finance and colonies, William Ditmann demobilization, transport and health, Landsburg for publicity, art and literature, and Richard Barth for socialist policy.

The personnel of this cabinet, with the exception of the President Ebert, changed rapidly from day to day, as the Independent Socialists and radicals forced or lost greater representation; but the fundamental principle for which it stood, orderly democratic government, was never overthrown, and President Ebert remained at the head of the governmental organization throughout.

In its dealings with the Armistice Commission the Cabinet was unremitting in its efforts to obtain modification of the armistice terms by emphasizing the genuine democratic character of the new government, and showing how the armistice was in fact directed against the German people and not the government. The growing realization among the people that the armistice and blockade were to be used as instruments of oppression tended to produce panic, and the Ebert cabinet, in communications to the people on that subject, sought to present the situation in a hopeful light.[57]

The new democratic government itself knew, within

[57]The German Armistice Commission announced, November 15th: Alsace-Lorraine will not be considered "occupied territory;" it will not be considered a reason to cancel the armistice if the Germans fail to carry out the terms for evacuation; German troops in East Africa will not have to make an unconditional surrender; Germany may determine its own war indemnity.

thirty-six hours of the signing of the armistice, that if the militarist element dominated the counsels of the associated governments, the spirit of the compact of the Trianon Hotel would be repudiated.

The armistice commission almost immediately charged that the armistice terms had been violated by acts of destruction and plundering committed by German troops, and assumed the right to impose additional exactions on this account. On November 20th the German High Command replied to this charge, that "The execution of the unheard of and technically impossible conditions would unavoidably bring about transgressions, and blame falls already, and will in future fall, exclusively on the Allied High Command."

The Peoples Commissioners consistently urged that American newspaper correspondents be permitted to come to Germany. "Germany," they said, "is seeking to devise a method of getting news to America without passing through the hands of the British censor."

"Free America," said the Tages Zeitung "should consider whether a league of nations can be built if eighty million people enter the league with fresh remembrances of deeds of violence."

The Berlin Zeitung am Mittag on December 5 said, "Public opinion in Germany has never ceased to believe in the sincerity of President Wilson. On the extent to which he carries through his ideas at the peace negotiations depends the solution of the question, whether at last universal peace returns to Europe, or whether the present terrible misfortune of Germany,

which casts its shadow on the whole world, is to be perpetuated."

Berlin was full of discharged soldiers; they were sedulously sought by the adherents of Liebknecht. In Berlin, as elsewhere, under the spartacist impulsion, Workmen and Soldiers Councils (or "arsols," as they were called) were rapidly organized. The test of whether the democratic government of Ebert was to prevail or fall depended upon whether the arsols finally supported it or the Spartacist leaders. On November 20 the Berlin Arsol, leaning to the Bolshevist principle, declared against the constituent assembly, and for the establishment of the council system. The influence of Ebert and the Majority Socialists was exercised in vain to alter this attitude.

Thereupon the Berlin Arsol asserted its superiority to the Ebert Cabinet or "Peoples Commissioners," as some now termed this body. But the Berlin Arsol represented only the City of Berlin, while the Peoples Commissioners represented Germany. Word came from Bavaria, Wurtemberg and Baden, that if the national assembly was not convened, south Germany would form an independent republic. Outside of Berlin it was only in the industrial sections that the council system met support.

Imperial Germany had been a union of federal states. These federal states were still conscious of their separate governmental organization, and their representatives in Berlin were insisting upon the convening of a national assembly, while Liebknecht, through the col-

umns of the "Red Flag," was advocating the calling of a revolutionary tribunal, the trial of the Hohenzollerns and the confiscation of their property.

The wireless station at Hamburg, in the hands of revolted marines, was receiving daily communications from Moscow, which were promptly printed in the issues of the "Red Flag." Two of Berlin's largest industrial plants were in the hands of the workmen, and being operated under their control. Kurt Eisner, in Munich, was agitating for revolution. Hugo Haase, the Independent Socialist in the Cabinet of Peoples Commissioners, late in November seemed about to forsake Ebert and join forces with Liebknecht, whose influence in Berlin was growing daily. There was frequent street fighting and disorder. What the men who had formed the German armies would ultimately do, as to the issue of a national assembly or a government by arsols on the Russian plan, would determine the character that the German government would have. A mass-meeting of four thousand non-commissioned officers, held in Berlin on November 30, adopted a resolution calling on the government to end the bolshevist agitation of Liebknecht and Rosa Luxembourg, and to demand the convocation of a national assembly.

In its dealings with the Armistice Commission, the German Government had protested against the complete surrender of locomotives and rolling stock as demanded, alleging the impossibility of assembling them on account of the lack of firemen and of oil. Its urgent pleas that food be permitted to enter Germany were

unremitting. Early in December, however, General Foch sent an ultimatum, demanding stricter compliance with the armistice demands, and threatening instant termination of the armistice and the occupation of Germany by allied troops. At the same time, Admiral Beatty, in reply to an appeal for mitigation of the naval blockade, refused any concession under the regime by which coastwise commerce was prohibited and fishing in the Baltic had been refused.

The Liebknecht forces were collecting machine guns, rifles and ammunition. His supporters went about the streets of Berlin in gangs, and there were frequent riotous demonstrations. Civilian morale seemed to be deteriorating, and there was political bewilderment. There was shortage of food everywhere, particularly in the northern seaports, where industry was dislocated and where there was a general feeling of desperation.

But, there were two great forces working against the success of the Spartacist's cause. The overwhelming mass of the people, everywhere except in the industrial districts, instinctively sought a regime of law and order, and the army was no less firm in its attitude on this subject. A representative convention of workmen and soldiers' delegates was called to convene in Berlin on December 16th, where the vital question of holding elections for a national assembly, or of establishing a council form of government, should be decided.

It was the firm purpose of the Spartacists to prevent the convening of a national assembly at all costs. It is said that the Spartacist's program, concerted with Mos-

cow, was to prevent the calling of a national assembly, overthrow the Ebert government, and force a condition which would lead the Allies to occupy Berlin; then to spread bolshevism among the allied troops. The desperate shortage of food, created by the operation of the land and sea blockade, was the Spartacists strongest ally in this plan.

The Convention of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates, representing councils from everywhere in Germany, assembled according to plan in Berlin. It met in the Prussian House of Deputies, and its proceedings occupied five or six days. The Armistice Commission had refused to permit delegates from the Rhineland to attend the Convention. It appears that the Armistice Commission seriously contemplated steps to prevent the assembling of this Convention. Some days before it opened, the Berlin papers warned that an ultimatum might be received from the Entente, demanding the immediate dissolution of all Workmen and Soldiers Councils, under the penalty of an advance into Germany if the demand were not met. "The spirit of the Entente" says one paper, "shows no trace of willingness to erect a peoples league on a foundation of mutual, peaceful, neighborly relations."

The columns of the Paris papers, at this period, unmistakably revealed a deep solicitude on the part of the French Government and press that a government having sufficient strength to function in an orderly way should not arise in Germany. Such a government could not but hamper the Supreme War Council and the peace

structure which it was preparing to fit into the Triangular Framework.[58]

One of the reasons alleged for the refusal, by the Supreme War Council, to deal with the Ebert Government, is almost incredible, because of the logical inconsistency upon which it was based. History bears out the fact, however, that it was given. It appears that in response to an appeal by the Germans, made before the renewal of the armistice on December 14th, for the early convening of the Peace Conference and the reception of German plenipotentiaries, the reply was made by the Armistice Commission, that the Entente Governments could not recognize the Ebert regime as a de jure government, that it would be necessary for the old Reichstag and the Bundesrath to be convoked before the Allies would deal with the Germans. Simultaneously, the French press was inveighing against the formation of a German national assembly, and calling for "La paix d' abord."

These bodies were instrumentalities of the old Imperial regime. They could have been summoned only by the Imperial will of a power which no longer had legal existence. That power had been overthrown to meet the demands of the associated governments, set forth in the October-November interchanges, and had been replaced by the republican regime of Ebert, which was legally responsive only to the will of the people.

[58]Le Temps, Dec. 25:
"Germany is hastening toward a republic of the Scheidemann type, that is toward a regime which will enforce German unity and prepare military revenge."

The demand of the Supreme War Council for the convocation of the Reichstag and Bundesrath was one which could not possibly have been met by the German Government, without violation of its obligations to the associated governments.

So solicitous, however, was the German Government that German plenipotentiaries might be received in Paris, that an attempt was made to convoke these defunct agencies. Constantin Fehrenbach, the President of the old Reichstag, issued a summons to the old members, but without setting place or time. Fehrenbach's action, as was to be expected, was accompanied by a storm of protest from all parties and the attempt was abandoned.[59]

In the Convention of Workmen and Soldiers Delegates, which opened on December 16th, the soldiers largely predominated. The Spartacists made persistent attempts, in the early sessions, to dominate the Convention. After some disorder they were put down. Ebert and Scheidemann declared, amid demonstrations of approval, "Berlin is not Germany". This Convention represented the will of the entire army, and of all

[59]Fehrenbach addressed the Chamber December 12th. In defense of his action in undertaking to summon the old Reichstag, he called attention to the fact that the Entente refused to deal with any other agency in Germany, and that it was necessary to procure a preliminary peace as soon as possible, in order to escape worse evils. He also said that Peoples Commissioner Ebert would not permit him to summon the Reichstag, and that he could not convince Ebert that it should be done. The Peoples Commissioner spoke in reply, declaring that what Fehrenbach advocated would be a violation of the peace accepted by the Allies at the Trianon Palace Hotel.

workers who were not Spartacists, and when, before adjourning, it declared for the convening of a national assembly, the question as to whether Germany would become Bolshevist or not was settled in the negative.[60]

Making no further effort, therefore, to take on artificial, imperialistic characteristics at the behest of the Supreme War Council, the government of the Peoples Commissioners proceeded with its plans for the convocation of a National Assembly, and for maintaining itself in authority in the face of Bolshevist disorders, until a constitution could be legally adopted.

The morale of the soldiers had never been broken. Thousands of troops were now entering Berlin in good order and under perfect discipline. Every effort was made to show the gratitude of the people toward them. General Von Gallwitz issued orders to his army group, telling them that they were unbeaten, and had earned the gratitude of the people, and urging them to refrain from interference with the Civil authorities. At the same time Leibknecht and his agents were meeting the returning units, and urging upon them the establishment of a government upon the Soviet model. Amer-

[60]The program adopted by the Convention of Workmen and Soldiers Delegates was as follows:

1. Fixed January 19th for elections of delegates to National Assembly.

2. Endorsed socialization of certain industries and coal mines.

3. Endorsed Ebert Cabinet, according it legislative and executive power.

4. Created a Central Workmen and Soldiers Council of twenty-seven members (to replace the Greater Berlin Council which had bolshevist tendencies and which represented only the city of Berlin.)

ican intelligence reports at this time dwelt upon the great industrial and economic stagnation in Germany, and intimated that food supplies were needed at once to prevent starvation and anarchy.

While the Ebert Government represented primarily the Majority Socialists, to whom Prince Max of Baden had relinquished authority on November 9th, its policies were being supported by all other parties except the Independent Socialists and the Spartacists. A new Democratic Party, organized by Theodore Wolff, was adhered to by many people of the middle classes. Its meetings were crowded and were addressed by Dernberg, Neumann and other liberal leaders.

As the Christmas holidays approached, disorders increased in Berlin. The Spartacists distributed arms and urged strikes by workers in the larger industries and in the public utilities. They made special effort to prevent the publication of newspapers. There was general gloom. Little travel was possible on account of lack of trains. Shops displayed flimsy substitutes for Christmas wares. Thousands of unemployed workmen, and many discharged soldiers, were begging on the streets.

The French press was denouncing the socialist leaders, and Brockdorff-Rantzau succeeded Solf as Foreign Minister, on the theory that the Entente might distrust a bourgeois less in that office than it would a socialist Foreign Minister.

The Monday before Christmas, sailors who had been on guard duty, and were to be paid off and discharged, started to riot. Aided by volunteer "public

safety guards," composed of radicals, they blockaded the Foreign Office and invaded the Palace. Twelve were killed and seventy wounded before the disturbance was put down.

This riot ushered in a campaign of violence by the Spartacists, who realized that if they could not gain control of the instrumentalities of government before the national convention was held, there would be no hope of Bolshevism in Germany. An armed mob seized the Prussian Ministry, took over the Vorwaerts printing office and announced that that paper would be published thereafter as the "Red Vorwaerts". They called for the overthrow of the Ebert Government for having called in Pottsdam troops against the sailor guard, and the replacement of Ebert and Haase by Liebknecht and Ledebour. There was apprehension among moderates that the Majority Socialist members of the cabinet might withdraw, leaving control in the hands of its members who were Independent Socialists, unless the latter dissociated themselves more completely from the Spartacist agitation against the Government. But the Executive Committee of the National Workmen and Soldiers Council (created at the convention which met on December 16) was now organized, was a body having national authority, and was non-Bolshevist. It stood squarely behind Ebert and the moderate parties which were supporting him. It consulted daily with the Cabinet, and the result of these consultations was that the Majority Socialists remained in the Cabinet, while the three Independents Haase, Ditmann and Barth, resigned. Their places were filled by three

Majority Socialists, among them Gustave Noske, a former editor and member of the Reichstag, and who since November had been Governor of Kiel. The apportionment of portfolios was made at a meeting of the new Cabinet on December 29, Scheidemann taking the portfolio of Foreign Affairs and Noske Military Affairs.[61]

Sunday, December 30 was a day of some anxiety, as Spartacist outbreaks were apprehended, but only mass meetings were held.

A Spartacist congress of one hundred delegates from all parts of Germany convened in Berlin on the first of January. Radek, the Moscow propagandist, mysteriously appeared, and delivered a fiery appeal for the introduction of Bolshevism. The congress voted to sever all connection with the Independent Socialists, whom they had been unable to control. In the session of January 2 a violent quarrel between Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg introduced dissessions. Liebknecht favored participation by Spartacists in the coming elections for a national assembly. Luxemburg declared that the meeting of a national assembly must be prevented at all costs. Her position was supported by a vote of 63 to 23.

Ten days of spectacular violence in Berlin followed. It could have been put down at an earlier date, but the

[61]These were the political developments which were taking place in Germany when it was falsely reported in London, on December 28 (during President Wilson's sojourn in England), that the extremists had seized power in Berlin, and that Herr Ebert's government was virtually no longer existent.

Ebert Government feared that a display of military power might provoke a military occupation of Germany by Allied forces.

During these ten days there was much intermittent violence, and in the Entente countries and the United States elaborate and exaggerated accounts of revolution followed the daily developments. On Sunday, January 5 the rioters again occupied the Vorwaerts building and the Wolff News Agency, and a revolutionary committee undertook to issue the Vorwaerts. Liebknecht harangued the crowds. During the next few days the Spartacists occupied Police Headquarters in the Alexanderplatz and the Royal Stables. From here they made sallies down Unter den Linden against the troops who were guarding the Chancellor's Palace in the Wilhelmstrasse. The Russians, Radek and Joffe, were active, and many Independent Socialists joined the Spartacists. On Monday, January 6th only three newspapers appeared, and banks and the Bourse were closed. It was said that the Government might go to Frankfort. But on the next day Peoples Commissioner Ebert issued an order against street gathering, and, for the first time, directed the troops to defend the Government. By January 10th they had driven the Spartacists from all their strongholds, cleared the Wilhelmstrasse and other thoroughfares, and broken the organized power of the revolutionists. In the disorders, both Liebknecht and Luxemburg were killed and before the 12th of January the attempt to introduce Bolshevism into Germany had definitely failed. All over Germany preparations were steadily going forward for

the elections on January 19th for delegates to the National Assembly. The elections were completed on the 20th and proved that the development of a republican form of government was the primary motive throughout the nation.

Out of a total of about four hundred and twenty delegates, the Majority Socialists elected about a hundred and sixty-five. Other conservative parties, including the Democrats, Centrists, and the National Party, elected nearly two hundred members. The Independent Socialists elected twenty-four delegates, and a few delegates were returned by other parties. With the support of the other conservative elements, which now outnumbered the Majority Socialists, the Ebert Cabinet remained in power.

The National Assembly was summoned to convene at Weimar on February 6th. Weimar was selected at the instance of the South German States and the West Prussian Provinces, who distrusted the leadership of Berlin. The opening of the National Assembly was impressive for solemnity, earnestness and simplicity. David was elected President of the Assembly, and Ebert President of the German Reich. In his speech of acceptance, which was frequently interrupted, he warned the Allies, saying that Germany might refuse to make peace if pushed too far. On February 11th a constitution was adopted and Germany was a de jure republic.

Germany was now under a legitimate and fully organized republican form of government. By reference to the preceding chapter, it will be seen that the elections

for delegates to the National Assembly were held the day after the Peace Conference was formally opened at Paris, and that the National Assembly was engaged in the orderly transaction of its legislative business on February 10th, when Marshal Foch was insisting, before the Supreme War Council, upon a military occupation of Germany on the ground that that state was a prey to Bolshevism and reaction.[62]

Neither during the period before President Wilson's departure for the United States, on February 15th, nor afterwards, was the German Government permitted to have any direct dealings with the civilian delegates to the Peace Conference at Paris. The associated governments dealt with it only through the Armistice Commission.

Under these circumstances, every effort of the German Government had to be directed to meeting the continuous and increasing demand of that body, in order to save Germany from the occupation which might follow a violation of its decrees, and to demon-

[62]On February 8 the French press (Journal) gave much of the speech of Ebert at the opening of the Weimar Assembly. It is interesting, and a matter of some wonder, that the Americans in Paris had ample opportunity to read and ponder this speech.

The speech stated how, in the German view, the war actually ended. It told of the food distress in Germany, due not only to the war, but to the blockade. It declared that the principle of spoliation was in the peace which the allies were imposing, that its purpose was vengeance and violence, and deserved the most energetic condemnation. But it expressed confidence in the principles of President Wilson. The conditions of the armistice were of an unheard of severity, and their execution "sans pardon." The German people demand entry to the society of Nations.

strating the good faith of the new government, in the hope that the Entente Governments might relent in their purpose sufficiently to relieve the menace of starvation, by permitting the importation of food.

The full meaning of the British Orders in Council, which had extended the blockade to the Baltic Coast in December, had gradually become clear to the German Cabinet. It had been followed almost immediately by the termination of all communication between the west bank of the Rhine and the rest of Germany. Germany was hermetically sealed. So long as the will of the Armistice Commission was resisted, so long would the German people be dependent solely upon their internal resources. If starvation became progressive, and was unrelieved, there would be no demand put forth by the Armistice Commission which the German Government would be able to resist.[63]

[63]The French contemplated a state of starvation in Germany with complacency. At a dinner at the Foreign Press Club on March 12th, Secretary Lansing had courageously spoken in behalf of a more merciful policy toward Germany, and the immediate amelioration of the widespread starvation there by the lifting of the food blockade.

The following are typical comments of the representative French press upon his remarks:

La Democratie Nouvelle: André Cheradame, quoting Mr. Lansing's statement that Germany must be able to obtain food, if she is to resist anarchy says, "As a matter of fact, supplying the Berlin Government with food is merely consolidating pan-German tendencies. Neither can it be proved that the supply of food will stop the spread of bolshevism, which is not necessarily a result of hunger. In Russia the hungry are not bolshevists; it is only when they are fed that they become bolshevists."

Le Siecle: "Mr. Lansing asks us not to oppose the revictualing of Germany. The Peace Conference has at last taken up this important

question, and it is clear that when the provision ships enter German ports, the German question will be settled. German debts will be recognized and pledges given."

Journal des Debats: "Mr. Lansing spoke of the well merited sufferings of Germany, but said that we risked losing the fruits of victory if we did not help to establish order there. We must supply food and raw materials, but industrial conditions must first be re-established by the conclusion of peace. If the present chaos continues, there will be no government left fit to treat with or capable of carrying out its undertakings. Mr. Lansing is right in saying that the Germans must be made to work to pay their debts. Only so, can German militarism be destroyed."

Le Temps says that food and raw materials are not at the bottom of the problem. "Germany is passing through a moral crisis that cannot be overcome by food supplies or bales of cotton. Until October 18th Germany lived on the idea of her invincibility. Everything is now changed, and she is waiting for guidance from the victors. What have we done that will lead her towards an organization which will be in the interest of peace? If we do not supply Germany we risk compromising our credit. If we supply the Germany of the Scheidemann's and Brockdorff-Rantzau, we merely fall out of the frying pan into the fire."

The Gaulois, on March 14th, commenting on proceedings in the Chamber of Deputies, regards the question of punitive damages as finally solved, and speaks a bit unguardedly;

"Mr. Klotz managed the situation very well. The Chamber was unusually clear-sighted, and refused to be carried away by the socialists. The Government must not, however, delay to let the country know how many thousand millions are to be demanded from Germany."

CHAPTER VIII.

The Interlude.

PRESIDENT Wilson was absent from Paris one month, returning there on March 15th. He was released for a time from every physical influence of the environment in which he had found himself since December 14th, 1918. In the peaceful isolation of a ten day ocean voyage, it would be possible to review and appraise the forces with which he had been in contact, to determine what had been the resultant of the impact of those forces with the force which he himself represented, what measures his experiences now recommended, and what changes of policy or tactics were demanded.

During two months in Europe, the President had been treading on strange ground, and had, in fact, been led far astray. He had been lured deeper and deeper into a Sirbonian bog of perplexities, where there was no time for thought, except of measures of self-preservation.

The almost unconquerable difficulties of his situation may be reviewed briefly.

All power in western Europe was centered in the camarilla behind the Supreme War Council. This camarilla was united, in a perfect union of the wills, that the American Peace should be rejected; that the Trianon Hotel contract should be repudiated; and that a peace of vengeance, and of protracted industrial servitude, should be imposed upon Germany. Behind the

Supreme War Council were the serried ranks of highly trained and obedient bureaucratic organizations in England, France and Italy, thoroughly aware of the purposes of the Supreme War Council, and desirous and capable of furthering its every measure.

This camarilla had been in intimate contact with President Wilson for two months. It had paid unremitting homage to his principles; it had proclaimed his leadership in public, but it had refused to follow it in private.[64] On the contrary, it had driven steadily forward toward the execution of a peace whose nature was repugnant to him. The measures it had insisted upon taking before his departure, and to which his assent had been obtained, violated fundamental principles of justice, and made the establishment of a real society of nations, such as he had contemplated, a vain and impractical ambition. In his efforts to concert the constructive thought of the world upon the framing of a great charter of world law and liberty, he had encountered only indirection, deceit and hypocracy, and found himself exposed to the menace of a personal hatred, the like of which he had never encountered in America.

In Paris there were no wise and benevolent sages, contributing their common store of wisdom to the advancement of the world's welfare. On the other hand, there was a desperate struggle for supremacy; the law of the jungle prevailed, the law of the tooth and the

[64] After the meeting of February 12th, for the renewal of the armistice, Clemenceau granted an interview to correspondents of the Associated Press, in which he stated that he was in entire accord with the principles of President Wilson.

claw, under which there is no code to hamper methods, and under which no quarter is given. It was new to the American psychology, and it was terrifying.

Nevertheless, during those two months, the President had spoken as a liberal statesman to liberal statesmen, urging a forward movement in world government, for which the people were now spiritually prepared. His words had fallen on arid and stony ground. He was dealing with forces which could be made to yield only to some form of compulsion.

Thus far, the camarilla had beaten the President at every point. He had been taken by surprise. Their methods were secret and stealthy, their conspiracy never in danger of betrayal.

Their power was enormous; the Triangular Framework assured success for the Entente peace, so far as Germany was concerned. The steady pressure of starvation was extorting from the German Government and the German people the necessary renunciations of colonies, territories and industrial freedom.

The camarrilla had only one vulnerable point. If the moral foundations of the Entente peace were made a subject of public discussion; if lawyers and journalists throughout the world were given the essential documents to construe, the Entente peace would assuredly be overthrown, because no honorable tribunal of jurists anywhere could say that it bore any resemblance to the peace agreement by which hostilities were brought to an end. If public opinion became convinced that the Trianon Hotel pact bound the Associated Governments to make a peace of moderation with Germany, the Tri-

angular Framework would fall apart and release the throat of a prostrate people from the Entente clutch.

If, on the other hand, the significance of the Triangular Framework, and the work of destruction which it was doing, continued to remain secret, and if the true significance of the pact of the Trianon Palace Hotel remained undisclosed, neither President Wilson nor any other influence could prevent the successful consummation of the Entente peace.

When President Wilson sailed for America, he was bound in the chains of secrecy. Unless he could strike them away he would remain powerless until the end, and would be compelled to witness the triumph of destructive forces. Only if the shackles of secrecy were struck away would the President be able to marshal the irresistible forces of public opinion, and lead them to a victory in the cause of the healing peace, which the Americans had gone to Europe to make.

The necessity of secrecy then was the Achilles heel of the camarilla, and of this it was fully aware. It had no fear that secrecy could not be maintained in Europe. All who knew the embarassing facts were of the bureaucracies, and loyal to the cause. Public opinion was lulled and successfully deceived; upon the statement of facts that had been presented to it by the governments, public opinion heartily supported them in the making of the Entente peace. The camarilla held Europe in the hollow of its hand. The developments which followed Mr. Wilson's departure betrayed a confidence on the part of the Supreme War Council that President Wilson would now be unable to burst

the shackles of secrecy with which he was bound. If they were right, in this confidence, their plans were assured of successful fruition.

They proceeded, therefore, with the making of the peace by precisely the same methods which they would have followed had the President adhered to the principle of punitive damages, and given his specific consent to it before his departure. It is said that, immediately after the President sailed, the Peace Conference definitely adopted the principle of punitive damages, and that a message by wireless, in the nature of an ultimatum, was sent to the President on the George Washington. The reply, also, is said to have been accepted by the Supreme War Council as a consent to the adoption of the principle.

The Reparations Commission immediately began a work which bore ultimate fruit in what are known as the reparations clauses of the Treaty of Versailles.[65]

Secrecy then was the Achilles heel of the Entente peace, where alone it could be given its death blow.

It would seem that these considerations, pondered in the long hours of repose on the George Washington, might have pointed the way of exit from the Sirbonian bog, and indicated the road back to high ground where,

[65] The French press, which was entirely sympathetic with the application of the principle of secrecy to the proceedings of the Reparations Commission, was informed by Sir George Hewhart, member, and English Attorney-General, on February 6th, as follows:

"Discretion is not less important than rapidity. It is not opportune to discuss these questions publicly. It is not good to mention the details of these labors or publish the results, but a great quantity of matter is assembled and being examined."

upon the President's return to Europe, victorious battle could have been waged.

The new course of action, which the posture of events seemed to recommend, would have been as follows:

To send an ultimatum to Paris by wireless from the George Washington that the United States would make no peace that did not honor the Trianon Hotel signatures. There should be liberal reparations, but no punitive damages or arbitrary confiscation of territory. The blockade should be lifted immediately to permit the entry of food into Germany, and the eight-hundred thousand German prisoners in the Camps at Carasonne, Orleans and Rouen be repatriated.

Having sent this ultimatum to Europe, the President would have turned his attention to that great homeland which was waiting to know how his fortunes had fared in Europe; and upon whose decision he was now about to stake all.

Upon his arrival in Boston, he would have disclosed to the American people, without reserve, the whole sinister scene through which he had passed in Europe. He would have reviewed the contents of the Peace notes of October and November, with their clear implication, and the final and unmistakable agreement of the Trianon Hotel.

He would have revealed the purpose of the camarilla to repudiate its binding obligation, its conscious deception of the Entente populations, the careful and secret erection of the Triangular Framework, the significance of the blockade which was even then choking a

prostrate enemy into insensibility, and the inhuman greed of an invisible financial power, which had its hand in every secret measure of the Supreme War Council.

He would have shown that the ban of secrecy was being laid upon the deliberations of the newly created Reparations Commission, because the things which it was doing could not bear the light of day. Placing all the evidence before them, as to the manner in which the war had come to an end, he would have asked the American people to choose between the American Peace and the Entente Peace.

It would have been a situation to which American public opinion would have given instant response. The hearts of his auditors would have responded in unison to his appeal, and the people throughout the country would have met the summons with equal enthusiasm. Domestic politics could not but have been subordinated to the magnitude of the importance of the juncture. There would have been no successful republican opposition.

With the American people behind him, the President would have awaited the response from Europe. What the peoples of the Entente had never learned from their governments they would have learned from the disclosures made in America. When they knew they had been deceived, and that the people of the United States would make no Entente peace with Germany, public opinion in Europe would no longer be the inert and docile thing which had so failed President Wilson during the two months he had spent in Europe. Cabinets

would have fallen and the camarilla would have been dissolved.

"Allied stocks," which Clemenceau had warned President Wilson, just before his departure, would be "affected" unless the principle of punitive damages was applied in the peace settlement, would have been very greatly affected. There would have been a financial crash, and the financial crash would have been salutary; for it would have meant the disappearance of hundreds of millions in absolutely fictitious values. The financial gamblers, governmental and private, would have been put to rout, and an honest reconstruction, which was absolutely essential for recovery in Europe, would have begun to take place. The obscure and dishonest financial intrigue that accompanied the making of the peace, the desperate efforts to give an appearance of balanced budgets which have since been made, and the specious arguments of experts for the stabilization of currencies by arbitrary conventions, and for their acceptance by the Government of the United States, would have been spared a weary world.

There is no point in the long negotiations, which ended in the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, at which the insufficiency of American agencies, public and private, for aiding the President of the United States in carrying out his executive function, is so apparent as during this interlude, when the opportunity was afforded for stock-taking and appraisal of fact and motive.

The political phenomena of which the situation of February 15th was the resultant, all lay before the

American agents for their observation and analysis. A few days of intelligent reflection on board the George Washington might have brought the true situation to light, but there were none there with the wisdom or the courage to be of real assistance to the President.

Mr. Wilson's mind was not elastic. He could not cast off the effects which the nervous stimuli of the environment of the past two months had produced. He could not again become the Wilson that the east-bound George Washington had carried. His spirit still lingered in the Sirbonian bog of Paris.

The truth of the matter was that during those two months the President had shifted his ground. Day by day, and hour by hour, he was under attack. Every utterance he let drop was irrevocable. Statements made in an informal and unpremeditated way committed him to important decisions. Inch by inch he was forced to shift his ground on a hundred issues. Like the king on a chess board he had repeatedly escaped from check only to reach checkmate at last.

How many admissions may the President have made in those crowded hours at Buckingham Palace, in Downing Street, where he lunched informally with the Imperial War Cabinet, or at Guild Hall, where the motive for establishing personal harmony was so strong? A Paris newspaper, in late January, told of an agreement between the British Imperial War Cabinet and President Wilson, reached in December, that the German colonies should be disposed of under the right of conquest, and that Britain should have the South Sea Islands and German East Africa; the Paris

newspaper argued that under the same claim of right France should have Togo and the Cameroons.[66]

Yet, up to February 15th, everything that had been done was merely tentative and contingent upon other decisions. The President had not made an admission that he did not have the right to withdraw, for they were all made upon the condition that a league of nations was to be adopted, and that the word reparations should not be construed to mean "punitive damages."

But, neither in his negotiations with the Europeans nor in his relations at home, was the President willing to retrace his steps.

In the United States he wanted to prove himself to be in the right. In the elections on the eve of his departure the country had returned a hostile Congress to power. The Republican opposition was even now watching eagerly for flaws in his policy and conduct, and might be able to place a false construction upon his words if, upon his arrival at Boston, he disclosed his need for the mighty help that the united support of America's citizens would give him in Europe. If he staked all upon the probability that the rectitude of his position would reunite the people behind him, regardless of party affiliation, only to find that his appeal had fallen upon deaf ears, then his position as a negotiator

[66]On January 29 the Journal de Debats contained a statement that "at the end of conversations between President Wilson and Lloyd George in London, Mr. Wilson admitted the principle of absolute possession of the German colonies, and sans entrave by England of those which are attributed to her." The Journal went on to say that this being so, France should have Togoland and the Cameroons.

in Europe would have become untenable and hopeless, and the chance which he still possessed of gaining some concessions in Paris would have been lost.

He, therefore, determined to go forward from his position on February 15, and not to retrace his steps to the position of November 11, 1918, and from there begin again.

Upon reaching Washington, nothing was done that thawed the coldness existing between the Executive and the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate, and the mutual understanding, absolutely essential under the circumstances, was not attained. It could not be attained unless essential information were given to the Foreign Relations Committee, and this information the President would not give. The Committee were left in as complete ignorance of the real issue at Paris as was the American public. The President was becoming, what the French journalists had described him to be, "a party leader, not a President."

President Wilson's declarations in the United States told, in effect, of successful negotiations in Paris. They held out the promise of the establishment of a league of nations which would have the genuine support of Europe. They revealed nothing of the savage retribution which was being visited upon the fallen foe. Just before sailing again President Wilson delivered an extended address before a great audience in the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, on the evening of March 4th. Former President Taft, by his presence on the platform, lent support to the President's cause.

The address was optimistic "The League of Na-

tions" he said, "is nothing more nor less than a covenant that the world will always maintain the standards which it has now vindicated by some of the most precious blood ever spilled. Europe is a bit sick at heart at this very moment, because it seems that statesmen had no vision and that the only vision has been the vision of the people".

"These gentlemen do not know what the mind of the world is just now. Everybody else does. I do not know where they have been closeted. I do not know by what influences they have been blinded; but I do know that they have been separated from the general currents of the thought of mankind, and I want to utter this solemn warning, not in the way of a threat; the forces of the world do not threaten, they operate. The great tides of the world do not give notice that they are going to rise and run; they rise in their majesty and overwhelm might, and those who stand in their way are overwhelmed. Now the heart of the world is awake and the heart of the world must be satisfied.

"The uneasiness in the European population is not due entirely to economic causes or motives. They see that their governments have never been able to defend them against intrigue or aggression, and that there is no force of foresight or of prudence in any modern cabinet to stop war. This is because nations are divided. This nation (United States) was set up for the benefit of mankind. It cannot desert the world. It would be thrown back into blackness and despair if we deserted it.

"I have tried once and again, my fellow citizens, to say to little circles of friends, or to larger bodies, what seems to be the real hope of the people of Europe, and I tell you frankly I have not been able to do so because when the thought tries

to crowd itself into speech the profound emotion of the thing is too much; speech will not carry. I have felt the tragedy of the hope of those suffering peoples.

"The critics have not observed the spirit of the boys in khaki who went to show that America would go anywhere where the rights of mankind were threatened. Having felt their crusading spirit, I am not going to permit myself to slacken. I do not mean to come back until it's over over there. If the statesmen of Europe used to be cynical, they are not that way now. They have been subdued by the awful significance of recent events and the awful importance of what is to ensue. Every man in that Conference knows that the treaty of peace will be inoperative without the constant support and energy of a great organization, such as is supplied by the League of Nations.

"Under the League of Nations, nations promise not to have alliances. Nations promise not to make combinations against each other. Nations agree that there shall be but one combination and that is the combination of all against the wrong-doer.

"And so, I am going back to my task on the other side with renewed vigor. I have not forgotten what the spirit of the American people is. But, I have been immensely refreshed by coming in contact with it again.

"We can look forward to the future with great confidence. Settlements will begin to be made rather rapidly in the Conference from this time on. The men engaged in these conferences are gathering heart as they go, not losing it. Amidst all the interplay of influences, there is a forward movement that is running toward the right. The only permanent thing is right. A wrong settlement is bound to be a temporary settlement. The spirits of men will rebel against it, and the spirits of men are now in the saddle."

This speech put the President in a false position; it

marked the fatal turning which was to lead to defeat and disaster. It did not reveal the fact that America was to become a party to a peace of vengeance, of a cruelty and malignancy unknown to modern standards. It did not indicate that American honor was at stake. It pictured the settlement going forward to the sure triumph of right and justice, and as marking the dawn of a new era, which would usher in new and better principles for the settlement of international disputes, and guarantee the safety and security of men and nations in their future dealings with each other.

There was nothing definite for intelligent American citizens to take hold of. Instead of focusing the eyes of Americans on Paris, and letting them see that for which their President was striving, it tended to lessen interest in Paris and enthusiasm for the President's course, and to fix interest on the breach which was fast widening between a Democratic President and a Republican Congress. They were willing now to hear what the Republican Senators had to say.

The President returned to Europe without the support of the American people, because he had not given them an issue upon which they could mass themselves behind him. When he reentered the deliberations at Paris, he did not bring back with him the prestige and power of leadership. He spoke with no greater authority than if he had been a private citizen.

None had observed with greater interest and curiosity the utterances of the President during his short stay in the United States, and the manner in which they were received, than the little group in Paris whose

arbitrary will was now fixing the destinies of Europe. None knew better than themselves, that if the will of America should be aroused to challenge their pretensions, there would be no alternative for them but speedy and complete capitulation. The result of their observations in America during the interlude calmed their apprehensions. "We can look forward to the future," President Wilson had told the people, "with great confidence".

American public opinion had undergone no psychosis, it was demanding nothing from Paris. The Supreme War Council could now eliminate from the political complex the hazard that latent forces across the Atlantic might overthrow its power.

CHAPTER IX.

The Final Six Weeks.

THE treaty-making processes of the Peace Conference, after President Wilson's return to Paris, extended from March 15 to May 7, when the completed Treaty of Versailles was handed to the German plenipotentiaries to sign. They present not a single new psychological aspect. The triumphant march of the forces which were moulding the Entente Peace moved with the same cadence, and employed the same tactics, as before February 14th. They were confident now that no obstacle of a formidable nature intervened between them and their destination.

With the lapse of the years the glass which history focuses upon the Peace Conference presents a less cloudy and confused image. The groups of masses of form and color and of light and shade which have seemed to bear little reference to each other are seen to be parts of a single picture, and, as the focus becomes adjusted, they merge into an image which has clearness, definition and meaning. When in this way time has given objectivity to the Peace Conference, and its dramatic aspects are understood, February 14th will be seen to be the moment of dramatic climax.

Three times the armistice had been renewed; the food blockade had lasted for more than three months; the allied purpose to impose a peace of vengeance was no longer disguised; and its consummation was already more than half attained. In the mass of activities going

forward with ever-increasing momentum the attitude of the American delegates had been permissive.

There had been protest, but not refusal to participate.

In the earlier negotiations at Paris there was one eventuality, the possibility of which in the American consciousness, was non-existent. This eventuality was a breach between the United States and the Entente. These nations were our tried and faithful friends. Standing shoulder to shoulder with them in their hour of peril, we had made their cause our own, and it was our resources and man-power that had decided the day upon the field of battle. All of those elements which engender in the mind a sense of true comradeship had been present in abundance in the day of peril, and the Americans who went to Paris to make the settlement were confident of negotiating in an atmosphere of mutual good faith, generosity and loyalty.

In the two months of negotiation just closing they, themselves, had manifested these qualities in abundant measure. In the earlier weeks the Europeans had seemed to meet them fairly on this high ground, but during the four weeks that brought this period of the peace conference to an end, good faith and confidence were shaken rudely, and negotiations which had been begun in the harmony, which marks a common foundation and a common point of departure, were terminating amidst heated altercations, suppressed antagonisms, and irreconcilable misunderstandings. The mercury that marks degrees of friendship had fallen quickly from summer heat to freezing.

But the eventuality of a breach between the United

States and the Entente continued to be an impossibility, in the minds of the American negotiators. They could not visualize it as developing under any circumstances. It would be a preposterous thing.

On the other hand, the Supreme War Council had cooly weighed the considerations which might bring this eventuality about. With shrewd wisdom, they perceived that the American spirit of accord would stand almost any strain, if the strain came gradually. Hence the secret erection of the Triangular Framework of the Entente Peace. The Fourteenth of February marked the moment of maximum strain. The American-Entente accord remained unbroken.

Between the 10th and the 14th of February the Americans definitely abandoned the only real issue in the Peace Conference—that of "punitive damages," and shifted their ground to a factitious issue, that of "the League of Nations." This issue the Europeans regarded as an absurdity, for they would under no circumstances be members of a league of nations which included Germany, and they knew that without Germany and the other enemy states, and without Russia, there could be no comprehensive association of nations, and the best that could be hoped for would be an alliance of the western powers. Absurd as this issue appeared to them, the Europeans accepted it. Privately, in secret council with President Wilson, they would trade the League of Nations for the Entente Peace. Publicly the League of Nations would be praised and advocated; it could be made to appear an issue of world-wide importance; it would throw dust in the

eyes of the uninformed and curious who, but for this matter of transcendent interest, might be inclined to inquire about the character of the terms of peace with Germany.

From Lord Robert Cecil and General Smuts the Supreme War Council learned how high a price President Wilson could be made to pay for the League. Hence the severity of the terms of the armistice renewal of February 14 (to which the delegates in the German National Assembly protested President Wilson could not have agreed); hence the insistence of Lord Sumner, in the meeting of the Reparations Commission on February 14, that the Trianon Hotel Pact was not a limitation on the right of the allies to impose indemnities; hence Clemenceau's refusal, in the Plenary Session of February 14, of French adhesion to the League of Nations.

In the interlude, during his short stay at home President Wilson led the people of the United States to accept the League of Nations as the paramount issue. During the remainder of the Peace Conference, therefore, this was held out to world public opinion as the great object and purpose of the Peace Conference. By accepting it the Supreme War Council had drawn a red herring across their own trail, and were thereafter safe from a public opinion which had been thrown off the true scent.

The drafting of the treaty embodying the Entente Peace went on rapidly during President Wilson's absence in March. His utterances in America were a blanket endorsement of the proceedings in the Peace

Conference, and could be used by the Europeans as evidence of his approval of what was being done at Paris.

On the President's return to Europe he resumed, in the secret councils, his role of protest. With his will still cumbered by the chains of secrecy, his bitter and determined protests found voice only within the confines of a council that had now shrunk in numbers to four men. The period is one of anti-climax. French public opinion has become more calm; the war scare and frenzy of apprehension over the German menace, that had so opportunely accompanied the negotiations in February for the renewal of the armistice, has partially subsided. The inspired French press is less irritable and more confident.[67] The Echo de Paris informed its

[67]Editorial sentiment about the middle of March was expressed as follows:

Petit Journal. The absence of President Wilson marks the division of the Conference into two periods, a period of preparation and one of realization. * * * Events in Central Europe show that Pan-Germanism is as rampant under the form of socialism as it was under the form of imperialism."

Le Siecle. "The Council of Ten is awaiting the arrival of President Wilson to discuss the eastern and western boundaries of Germany. Probably the rapidity with which they will then be determined will astonish the people. A week hence the German frontiers will have been determined. Let us hope there will still be a Germany behind them."

Le Petit Parisien: "But above all let us welcome him as the supporter of the League of Nations, who has combatted opposition and suspicion and returns with the added prestige of the speech in the Metropolitan Opera House and the support of men like Taft who, though not of his party, wish to collaborate with him in a work of vast significance to humanity."

La France: "How often have men rejected the opportunities

readers that the indemnity would be extended over a period of thirty years, and that the League of Nations would probably have to govern Germany during that period. The Gaulois began to grow impatient over Peace Conference procrastination—"The Government must not delay to let the country know how many thousand millions are to be demanded from Germany."

The issue of "punitive damages" was, indeed, all but settled and the reduction of its voluminous terms to writing was well under way. But at Paris indemnities and punitive damages continued to be spoken of euphemistically as reparations.

The armistice renewals had enormously extended the scope of the demands which Foch was able to impose at the point of the bayonet. In all the territorial and economic renunciations of title, and in the assumption of continuing industrial penalties, the breaking of the German will to resist was accomplished at Spa and Treves, and not at Paris.

Besides the armistice conventions of December 14, January 16 and February 17, there were numberless

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offered by destiny to settle their differences; we will be another example if we do not establish the Society of Nations. German indemnity should have been settled first; the Conference would then find its work simplified, and unrest in Germany would cease. The Russian problem next; then the Society of Nations."

Echo de Paris: "Followers of Senators Poindexter, Borah and Reed wish the American Government to remain aloof from European affairs. Another party, led by Senator Knox and Senator Lodge accepts the League, but regards it as an alliance, not as a super-state. One thing at a time, let the League settle the German question and the rest will follow."

concessions exacted in the intervals between those dates. Copies of these additional conventions were never made a part of the records of the Peace Conference: they are not on the files of the American State Department today. The Supreme War Council made the peace with Germany at Spa and Treves; at Paris it concerned itself merely with the task of securing American assent, and with the proportionate distribution of the plunder which the Armistice Commission had extorted.

Closeted again with Lloyd George, Clemenceau and Orlando, the President found these gentlemen wrangling heatedly over the distribution of the spoils which they now felt assured lay within the allied clutch. Called upon to act as moderator in these controversies, the President was put in the position of having recognized the existence of the spoils by implication.

As to the League of Nations, it had become more doubtful than on the day of the Third Plenary Session, whether Europe would become a party to it at all. It would not do so if America refused adhesion to the principle of "punitive damages," furthermore France would indemnify herself with the left bank of the Rhine and the Saar Valley unless agreement was reached. If a satisfactory agreement were reached by the Big Four France might show greater moderation in the matter of the Rhine and the Saar settlements.

In order to keep the final text of the League Covenant incomplete until acquiescence in the principle of punitive damages was secured, the Europeans pushed controversy to excess upon two amendments to the League of Nations Covenant, in both of which cases

President Wilson was on the defensive. These were the Monroe Doctrine Amendment proposed by the Americans, and the Racial Equality Amendment proposed by the Japanese. In both cases an involved and speculative political philosophy, worthy of the talents of Lord Robert Cecil and General Smuts, dominated the discussions. When the intellectual confusion in the counsels of the Big Four was ultimately ended, by agreement upon the principle of punitive damages, both of these amendments had served as useful tools of the Supreme War Council. The Monroe Doctrine was defined in the Covenant as a "regional understanding," and the Racial Equality Amendment (Shantung having been apportioned to Japan) was dropped.

It was about the first of April that President Wilson yielded upon the fundamental issue; saying that he would agree to the principle of punitive damages, provided Lloyd George and Clemenceau could come to agreement upon the proportionate shares of France and Britain. The President was worn out physically and mentally. The pressure of enormous forces had been relentless.

It is said that in the final struggle of the wills with Clemenceau, the President threatened to make public the American position on reparations. It was a weapon that no longer had value. If in December Wilson, the acknowledged leader and master of world public opinion, had publicly announced "the American position on reparations," the Peace of Versailles would have been a different kind of peace from that which was imposed. But in April, world public opinion was no longer united

behind the President. The Supreme War Council had isolated the general from his reserves, and had met and defeated them separately. It is said that Clemenceau boldly met the challenge of the President to "make public the American position on reparations," and instantly agreed that the President should do so, declaring that if he, Clemenceau, should appeal to the world for the justice of the French position, public opinion would overwhelmingly support France. And Clemenceau was right. The golden period when the American Peace could have been made to prevail had come in December and faded in March.

Bolshevism was now rampant in Hungary, anarchy threatened Western Europe, and all who were not under the influence of the French militaristic philosophy, began to be apprehensive of the Bolshevist influence upon Germany, now writhing under the pressure of the food blockade. This was no doubt a consideration which further influenced the President's capitulation in April.[68]

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[68]The Denmark "Politiken" contained the following on April 26:

"On Wilson's return, a quick peace was expected, as the committees had been busy during his absence. But he insisted on completing the League of Nations and incorporating it in the Treaty. He was strongly supported by England.

"Then at the end of March came Bolshevism in Hungary. Paris was panic-stricken. The voices from Germany now had their effect. Wilson and Lloyd George considered it necessary to reduce the conditions. They sent General Smuts to Buda Pesth. Violent French reaction. Ill-will at constantly seeing her claims put aside.

"Then the French voice met a response in England. The French press reprinted Lloyd George's pre-election promise of a hard peace. George bowed before the storm in England. The English delegates

The long stubborn and obscure struggle between Europe and the Western Republic had now come to an end. The Peace Conference exhibits a new phase. There is no longer any uncertainty as to what sort of a peace shall be made; Europe shall have its way. The months of May and June are dedicated to one single important enterprise—uniting and converging all available forces to break the desperate resistance of the German Government and people against a peace involving ruin and slavery.

This brings us to an episode which marks the triumphant consummation of the purpose of the Triangular Framework—the Brussels Conference which convened on March 23.

At this conference the Supreme War Council negotiated with the German Government for the lifting of the blockade and the regular shipment of food—the first bona-fide negotiations upon this subject since the Armistice of November 11, 1918.

Germany was now facing actual starvation. In all beleaguered countries during the war, the months of April and May was the period in which the pinch of hunger was sharpest. It was the period when winter

swung around and supported France and the Italian delegates joined them.

"Wilson, who had sent for the George Washington, had suddenly to face an English-French-Italian coalition. To have the League he must compromise on his Fourteen Points.

"It resulted in a semi-official statement of the Rhine as the frontier of Germany, the Saar district to France, and extraordinarily heavy indemnities. Europe had overthrown American control of European affairs."

stores had been exhausted, and the spring crops were not yet available. Everywhere, except among the rich, there was under-nourishment. Children went about in paper clothing.

Information about the Brussels Conference is meagre, but there is enough to show that the signing of the food contract was conditioned upon the signing simultaneously of financial terms to be incorporated in the Treaty of Versailles. An allied Financial Commission (the first civilian representatives of the Inter-Allied Peace Conference to deal directly with the German Government), upon which Thomas Lamont and Norman Davis were the American representatives, met a German Financial Commission, and signed an agreement which covered in substance the property clauses of the Versailles Treaty. Germany renounced contractual rights in various parts of the world, worth not less than a billion dollars a year—among them her control of Algerian phosphates, Australian zinc and bauxite, and her monopoly of coal-tar products.

The consideration which Germany received in return was a definite contract for the regular importation of food into Germany. By the terms of this contract Germany was to deposit immediately as a guarantee of payment the sum of 200,000,000 marks in gold, at the National Bank of Belgium; Germany was to be permitted to purchase 350,000 tons of food in April, and to purchase the same quantity each succeeding month thereafter.

Upon the convening of the commission on March 23, the Germans submitted a list of securities which they

were willing to exchange for the food. When this list was approved by the allied delegates, and the gold deposit made as security, and when the financial agreements had been signed by Germany, the food contract was signed by the allied delegates. The deposit of gold marks was effected between March 26th and April 3d.

When the Brussels convention was signed famine in Germany was approaching the point of culmination. Never since the Entente had instituted the blockade had the poor so suffered for want of potatoes, fat and meat. Cotton and linen were lacking.[69]

So skillfully had the combined agencies of the Entente Governments concealed or distorted the truth as to conditions in Germany, that the entire American delegation in Paris appears to have been deceived. They were kept in ignorance of conditions which, had they known them, would surely have disturbed their equanimity.

The capitulation of the German Government coincided with the capitulation of the Americans on the issue of punitive damages. So long as a ray of hope

[69]A French writer in the Revue d'Economie Politique, who as long afterward as January, 1922, manifests the uncompromising Gallic spirit, commented as follows upon the effect made upon some of the Americans when they came face to face with German negotiators for the first time:

"The Germans succeeded so well in their propaganda of misery that certain Americans declared that if they had known what ravages the blockade had produced they would never have tolerated it. Articles published in England maintained that the German sufferings were fully comparable to the ruins of France in the north."

existed that America would prevail over Entente ruthlessness, the moral courage of the Germans had not deserted them. When this hope faded the German resistance gave way.

The Brussels Convention having been signed and the gold deposited, it would seem now that the regular flow of food supplies into Germany would begin at once. But it must be borne in mind that the Treaty of Versailles was not yet signed. Too quick a release from the pains of famine might renew the German will to resist.

It was found, therefore, that there was a great shortage of shipping, which would entail some delay; and surplus and available grain stocks were so short that it would be impossible to spare more than 180,000 tons of grain before May. The motive that devised the Triangular Framework actuated the Supreme War Council to the last, and through one or another unavoidable cause only a trivial proportion of the food paid for at Brussels, under a contract for proportionate deliveries in April and May, was delivered in German ports before the Treaty of Versailles was signed late in June.

In the last week in March the steamships Cleveland, Patricia and Cape Finisterre, carrying food, left England for Hamburg. It is said that the first food cargo to enter Germany from England consisted of "considerable quantities of bacon which, while unpalatable, was still perfectly usable; also a quantity of beans."

There was food at Rotterdam, waiting for shipment to Germany, when the Brussels credits were fixed. In late March some German ships, under allied control,

sailed from German ports for England, where German crews were to be replaced by American crews; they were then to go to French ports to transport American troops to New York, and return to Germany with food. An American transport loaded with food, the steamship West arrived at Hamburg on April first. On March 27, when the Brussels conference had arrived at certain agreements, the first American flour to reach any German city was distributed in Hamburg. It was sufficient to give each inhabitant one half-pound a week for four weeks. Out of this 3,000 hundredweight was sent to Berlin.[70]

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[70]News items in America at this time refer to this subject as follows:

"The chief of the British commission at Spa announces in a note that approximately $30,000,000 worth of American, and $20,000,000 worth of British food-stuffs await immediate delivery in fulfillment of the Brussels agreement. When gold for payment reaches Brussels, as it will do almost immediately, transportation can begin.

"A report from Switzerland that the value of foodstuffs deposited there for Germany is over one billion francs; but these can be taken over only after the signing of the preliminary peace."—(Christian Science Monitor, March 27, 1919.)

"The first shipment of foodstuffs, including lard, bacon and flour, left Rotterdam to-day for Germany in accordance with the agreement reached at Spa on February 8."—(New York Times, April 2,1919.)

"Distribution of American wheat flour began in Hamburg Thursday, April 3rd. Berlin has received 3,000 zentners, and on arrival of further consignments will begin distribution."—(Christian Science Monitor, April 7, 1919.)

"The Supreme Blockade Council, having authorized the Swedish Red Cross to export fish to Germany, 200,000 barrels of herring are now available.

Experts anticipate this year's German harvest will be only half as good as normal, even in the most favorable circumstances, owing to prolonged shortage of artificial fertilizers."—(Christian Science Monitor, April 7, 1919.)

The plans of the German Food Administration, after the regular flow of food imports should begin, was to give priority to industrial communities; the ration was one-quarter pound of bacon and fifty grams of fat, and one-half pound of flour per person.

The first evidence of the relaxing of the food blockade in the Baltic (which had been instituted after hostilities ceased and maintained for five months), is permission for the exportation by the Swedish Red Cross in the first week in April of 200,000 barrels of herring to Germany. At the same time Ambassador Morris, at Christiania, was telegraphically informed that the Supreme Blockade Council had cancelled all prohibitions on exportation of fish from Scandanavia to Germany. This action was taken pursuant to a provision in the Brussels convention that "restrictions on German fishing in the Baltic are to be removed at once."

Shortly afterwards the German Government was officially informed that permission would be granted for negotiation and doing business with firms in neutral countries, even should these have been on the blacklist, provided this was done with the approval of the Blockade authorities; notice of approval was to take place through the Inter-Allied Commercial Committee, at the Hague, Java Straat 58.

The cautious steps taken by the Supreme War Council for lifting the blockade, some of which have been detailed above, reveal how directly this action was made to depend upon the acquiescence of the German Gov-

ernment in the punitive clauses of the Treaty of Versailles. They also furnish sufficient evidence of the drastic character of the five months food blockade.

The Brussels conference made it possible to draft the financial clauses of the Treaty; the agreement of the Europeans and the Americans upon punitive damages as a principle of action, and upon the clauses of the League of Nations made the drafting of the entire treaty possible. The draft was completed toward the end of April and the Germans were directed to send their plenipotentiaries to Paris to execute it.

Some consideration of the state of Germany while the Peace Conference was sitting is essential in order that the proceedings at Paris may be understood. When President Wilson left Europe on February 15, the German Government was standing out, as has been set forth in the seventh chapter, for terms of peace involving the immediate conclusion of a preliminary peace based on the Wilson principles, the repatriation of the German prisoners, the retention of the German colonies, and mutual disarmament of the combatant nations.

The National Convention had assembled at Weimar, adopted a republican constitution, and elected Friedrich Ebert President of the German Reich. The bourgeois parties in the Convention equaled or exceeded the Majority Socialists in strength, and the combined representation of these two elements greatly exceeded that of the Independent Socialists and radicals. The Majority Socialists, by common consent, continued to conduct the administrative branches of the government.

The crushing terms upon which the armistice was renewed in February were debated and accepted by the National Assembly, and it was under its instructions that Erzberger signed them. Although Foch's statement that President Wilson knew and approved of them was received with incredulity and consternation, the debate brought out the fact that the alternative for refusal to accept the terms was military occupation of Germany by allied armies. This alternative was one which the delegates wished to avoid at any cost, and the compelling motive of keeping the foreigner out of Germany actuated them to ratify the armistice convention.[71]

Realization of the full consequences soon spread through Germany. Fear of the future agitated the population, and was particularly strong among the working classes.

Following the shooting of Kurt Eisner, the radical leader, Munich was in chaos, and the central soviet council proclaimed a proletarian dictatorship in Bavaria. Brunswick, Baden, Gotha, Manheim and Plauen experienced radical disturbances.

In late February negotiations proceeded rapidly for the union of German Austria with Germany. When the movement reached serious proportions the French interfered, and through the varied activities of the Allizé Commission in Vienna the movement was stopped.

[71]On Sunday, February 16, the German cabinet sat from 10 to 4 discussing the armistice terms. Finally decided to accept unconditionally.

Early in March the German Government denounced terrorist attempts against the National Assembly. "The economic distress," it said, "is greater than the political danger. Every strike brings us a step nearer to the abyss. Only work can save us." Some of the socialist members of the Cabinet favored a provision in the constitution for representation of the Arsols (workmen and soldiers councils) in the Government. The demand of the radicals for the adoption of the Moscow Council System manifested itself in repeated strikes in the industrial districts.

The Independent Socialists held a four-days convention in Berlin, beginning March 2, and demanded the retirement of Scheidemann and Landsberg from the Cabinet. Hugo Haase declared for the soviet principle, denounced the National Assembly and asserted that "the proletarian revolt is wide awake and marching, independent of its leaders." This meeting was accompanied by strikes and disorders in Berlin. The trams stopped running, and for some days the city was without water, electricity or gas.

Noske, Minister of War, assumed executive power, and the telegraph and telephone offices, the Reichsbank, the food depots, and the railway stations were guarded with troops from the Army Corps of General von Luttwitz.

On Monday, March 3, the Cabinet was hastily called together, for a conference with the German Armistice Commission and representatives of the German shipping interests, following a telegraphic demand from General Foch for the immediate delivery of the Ger-

man mercantile fleet, irrespective of the question of the supply of food. The repeated assurances since the armistice of speedy food relief had been a persuasive influence in securing German acquiescence in armistice demands, but had been honored by the Entente only in their breach. At this meeting the Cabinet refused to sign away the mercantile fleet unless a definite guarantee of food relief was afforded.[72]

Under radical pressure, and in view of conditions in Berlin, the National Assembly adopted a resolution that "the control of industry by bodies of self-administrative character under National supervision, is of universal importance. Scheidemann, reversing his position, announced his adhesion to the principle of incorporating the arsols in the constitution and of socializing the coal mines and power-development agencies.

On March 7 Berlin was under martial law, and four hundred, chiefly revolutionaries, had been killed or wounded. Order was restored and the public service utilities were again in operation.

Food conditions everywhere were becoming more and more deplorable. The population in general was insufficiently nourished and clamoring for food assistance from the allies. By the middle of March thirteen thousand miners were on a food strike in the Ruhr district. The political situation in upper Silesia, where the last armistice convention had given the Poles the frontier of 1772, was tense. Hindenburg declared

[72]"On March 7 the Germans broke off the parley at Spa over their merchant fleet, refusing to agree to hand it over to the allies until they should be guaranteed food supplies."—(World Almanac, 1920.)

that Danzig should not be annexed to Poland. Reports were coming from Paris that a buffer state was to be formed along the Rhine, and aroused bitter opposition in the press. The tendency was to cast prudence aside in public utterances, and to declare that Germany was being economically ruined, but that her army had not been defeated in the field.

On March 13 the National Assembly passed a bill for the socialization of the coal industry, and adjourned to reassemble in Berlin on March 25. Erzberger, in a public speech said;

"The German people trust Wilson entirely, and leave their fate in his hands. Recent proposals for the League of Nations contradict President Wilson's program. Germany will be disgraced if she loses her colonies. The unconditional annexation of Alsace-Lorraine and Polish claims on Danzig are both unreasonable. The Entente, by prolonging the war, is both directly and indirectly responsible for damage in the war zones. We have no obligation except to Belgium, which we will fulfill. Germany is no more to blame for the war than other nations. Our eyes and hopes are fixed on Wilson."

When in March the soviet regime of Bela Kuhn was established in Hungary, many competent observers believed that Bolshevism would get the upper hand in Germany unless a speedy improvement as to the supply of raw materials for the resumption of industry, and general relief in the food situation, were soon secured.[73]

[73]"March 16, 1919. He (Sir W. Robertson) tells me that all the reports concur that the poorer Boches are terribly short of food. The whole of Germany is fed up; fed up with the late government, fed up with their press deceiving them, and with the present government for being unable to make peace."—(Colonel Repington's Diary.)

The loyalty of some of the troops stationed in Berlin, especially the Sailors Division, was wavering. The Executive Committee of the Berlin Arsol was active, and the Bolshevist agitators, pointing to the successes in Hungary, were hopeful of establishing a commune in Berlin.

Bela Kuhn's rise to power in Hungary, as the Foreign Commissary of a proletarian dictatorship, marked the climax of the Bolshevist menace to Europe. It had no real repercussion in Germany, although Scheidemann said "Hungarian Bolshevism results from the imperialistic policy of the Entente. Germany, deprived of Danzig and the Saar basin would be ripe for Bolshevism, and Bolshevism in Germany means Bolshevism throughout Europe." Bolshevism did not supervene in Germany and the red tide began to recede.

By the end of March the terms of peace began to overshadow all other considerations. The Government had made concessions looking to the socialization of coal mines; it had sufficient loyal troops to protect itself, and sufficient volunteers to keep its military forces properly recruited. The systematic disarmament of civilians was possible, and the government control over depots, arms and arsenals was complete. In spite of industrial misery there was national unity and a common interest in the fate of the nation.

The spirit of protest against the peace terms was strong throughout Germany. On Sunday, March 23, there were mass meetings in Berlin, and crowds gathered before the Adlon Hotel singing "Deutschland ueber alles."

The Armistice Commission increased its pressure for the relinquishment of the German mercantile fleet. This convention was signed about the middle of March, and by the end of that month eighteen steamers had sailed from Hamburg. There was much difficulty in getting crews, the sailors fearing that the alienation of the German shipping would result in destroying their means of livelihood. In Bremen and some other ports they obstinately refused to sail.

The agitation in Germany against the occupation of Danzig by General Haller's divisions was continuous. Under the armistice agreement access to Poland by the Entente and "their allies" was provided for. The Germans did not admit that Poland could legally be regarded as an Entente "ally" during the war, and on this ground resisted the entry of Polish troops through Danzig. Demonstrations in Danzig were continuous; "Danzig is Prussian," declared the German citizens, "and will always remain so." Against this demand of the Armistice Commission the German resistance was so strong that it resulted in the signing of a convention on April 4, by the terms of which Haller's divisions would not go to Danzig at all, but would be transported by rail across Germany to Warsaw.

The developments in Paris, which reached their culmination about the first of April, and the negotiations concerning food relief in the Brussels Conference, brought final disillusionment in Germany as to the meaning of the Wilson promises. The Vossische Zeitung, on the third of April, said:

"France desires to pursue an independent continental policy, which is opposed by England and America. This is the last attempt of the American representatives to hold a leading position at the Conference. Germany would fare much better by making an agreement with France than by trusting to the empty promises of America."

Among the conservative elements, there were a few who advocated the immediate acceptance of Bolshevism, rather than assumption by the nation of the enormous Entente indemnities, but this was a counsel of desperation, which found small support.

In early April the misery among the Ruhr miners was great. They took as a watchword "No work until food is furnished," and threatened to stop all work after April 9, including the emergency work of keeping the pumps going. The promises of the Government of a speedy improvement in the food situation, based upon expectation of immediate food importations under the provisions of the Brussels Conference, lost their effect as the expected relief failed to arrive in April as agreed, but the realization that food relief depended in part upon continued coal production for delivery to the allies prevented the sabotaging of the mines by flooding.[74]

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[74]In the Prussian Diet the Minister of Foreign Supplies had announced, on March 29, the Government's plan for distribution of the food, which it was announced would immediately be made available under the Brussels Convention.

At the same time Dr. Gustave Bauer, German Minister of Labor, urged the miners not to insist on a six hour day, as Germany expected to pay for food with coal. Strikers were also urged not to

When the general food relief, publicly announced, which the signing of the Brussels convention was expected to bring at once, failed to be experienced as the month of April passed, and information as to the character of the peace treaty was disseminated, bitter hostility to the Entente showed itself among all classes. Bolshevist agitators spread reports that the first cargoes of flour and bacon received from England were unfit to eat, and cited this as proof that Germany must look to Russia and not to the allies for help.

The entire press of Germany, socialist and conservative, which was now aware of much that the completed treaty would contain, advocated refusal to sign. So overwhelming was the sentiment against it that the Ebert Government privately consulted General Hindenburg at his headquarters at Kolberg as to the character of the military resistance which Germany might make if hostilities were reopened. The only alternative to signing, however, was an alliance with the Moscow

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make the fulfilment of the Brussels agreement concerning food impossible.

An ingenious British observer's views of the influence of the food shortage on the Spartacist movement were as follows:

"The Spartacan leaders, having no food or work to offer, are being deserted by their followers. The marines have deserted, as there was not enough money to pay a regiment. Only the military party profits by the conditions, because only by joining the volunteer army can a German workman obtain the necessaries of life. Wages paid during the war, plus five marks daily, and an additional 300 marks if he produces his old uniform, and war-time allowances for his family, are his immediate rewards for joining."

Soviet, and this was repugnant to the overwhelming majority of the German people.[75]

The German delegates, therefore, in response to the summons of the Supreme War Council, departed at the end of April for Paris.

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[75]After the war the weak neutral countries of Europe feared the Entente and its military power. Nevertheless their press denounced the treaty in unmeasured terms and with considerable daring, as may be seen by the following editorials:

From the Haagsche Post, May 17, 1919:

"Criticism of the long document handed to the Germans must of necessity revert to the solemn promise which was made, and which it was thought would have been fulfilled. The more passionately the Entente cause has been supported the greater must be the disappointment. It is no longer a question of pro-Entente or pro-German. It is now a question of the future of Europe in which the peoples of the Allies have as great an interest as those of the neutral states and the conquered powers.

"Even a superficial reading of the draft treaty leaves the impression that there is no trace whatever of statesmanship to be discovered. It is the product of the party politicians, bound by election promises given in haste, and under the influence of the election.

"The lawyers are simply astonished at the monstrosities contained in the document in the judicial sphere. The writer considers that the compulsions for the Centrals to sign the constitution of the League of Nations, of which they form no part at the moment of signing, is like making someone sign articles of association of a joint-stock company who is not a shareholder.

"To compel Germany to rescind treaties with third parties who have not signed the peace conditions, without their permission, is an equally great offense against the basic principles of justice. * * *

"The treaty, if signed in its present form, will make it impossible for the coming generations, and the present also, to live a peaceful life in Europe. It is abject slavery under the tyranny of the fear of war. * * *

"The danger of dissensions among the allied states is greater than that of German aggression."

From "Politiken", May 8th. (Denmark.)

"A merciless peace, hard as iron. With regard to territory Germany loses about 100,000 square kilometers, (as much land as Holland, Belgium and Switzerland together), about 10,000,000 people, the iron of Lorraine, the coal of the Saar, and upper Silesia. All the markets of Asia and Africa go to her conquerors. Her ships disappear. She builds ships for the Allies. Immense indemnities.

"The western border of Poland will not be more than 100 kilometers from Berlin. Germany will extend only to the eastern borders of Brandenburg and Pomerania. It is unheard of in military and diplomatic history."

The following comments from the German press in the interval between May 5, when the Treaty of Versailles was handed the German plenipotentiaries, and May 20, when their signatures were demanded, throw light on the state of German public sentiment at that time:

"In the speeches in the Assembly there was a general complaint of disappointment in Wilson. After the military defeat, Wilson was suddenly transformed from the servant of English capital into a pure idealist and the savior of Germany. We have never shared either view. We know that with all his good will he cannot overcome the capitalistic, imperialistic facts. Not Wilsonian idealism but international socialism alone can bring true peace among nations."—(Freiheit, May 5.)

"The peace treaty is a German victory, for it shows the enemy's invincible fear of German strength. They are robbers and blackmailers, who would rob our country and bring a curse upon it. Bolshevism would be the lesser evil. What a Gambetta could do a German may be able to do in still greater need."—(Hamburgscher Correspondent, May 13.)

"Wilson has been defeated at Versailles. He, himself contributed toward soiling his high ideals of justice and tearing up his principles. If the financial and economic demands of the Entente are forced upon us it means that we cannot spare a penny for our invalids, our widows, and our orphans; that the whole structure of our social legislation collapses, and that everything is destroyed that has been done in Germany to protect the weak against human disasters. If the Government refuses to sign, a wave of enthusiasm may sweep through the German people, but when the hunger is sharpened, and the block-

ade sharpened anew, the Government will be held responsible for everything."—(Vorwaerts, May 14.)

"The peace treaty is a plan aiming, not at the reconstruction of devastated France, but at the establishment of a new and greater France, for which all of the building stones of the valuable ruins of collapsed Germany are to be used. Capitalistic imperialism, which was combatted under the pretense that it was the organizer of the war, never celebrated greater orgies than at the organization of this peace. Having secured political and military preponderance, France wants to become Germany's heir as the first Continental industrial state. Its jealousy of Germany's economic development is perhaps greater than its hatred."—(Berliner Tageblatt, May 14.)

"The prophesied reduction of Germany to an Anglo-American province becomes daily more probable, and is almost unavoidable.

"The most bitter after taste which in any case will remain is the realization of the discrepancy between promises and fulfilment, which is the curse especially of those persons in whose morality the vanquished believed."—(Same.)

"Wilson, to this very hour, is a constant puzzle. We neither place him as a selfish servant of Wall Street capitalism nor a second Solon or Aristides. We shall consider it possible Wilson intended bringing about a just peace. But he cannot have read the Paris concoction very carefully, else he would not have declared to the Italians, but a few days before, that the peace with Germany was to be according to the principles of right and justice. * * * It was Wilson's pledge which led Germany to lay down her arms, and enabled her to bear the six months martyrdom of the armistice."—(Hamburger Fremdenblatt, May 19.)

"It is certain that we cannot continue living as a nation if we accept this peace, but must prepare for our national death. We must reckon with the possibility that the enemy governments remain incurable, and the feeling for justice and compassion remain blunt in the whole world. It is our duty to resist such possibilities. The policy of a peaceful settlement of political and military differences with Russia, and withdrawal of German troops in Lettland and Lithuania in order to have them at disposal on the Polish and Czech borders, is one of necessity. If it turns out that we cannot proceed further in the way of reasonable peace, we must ask ourselves the question whether peace with Russia is a means to force another

peace with our Western enemies, and thus counteract the fate intended for us."—(Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung, May 11.)

"It was conscious deception when the enemy asserted it was only fighting militarism and Kaiserism, and the enemy has now proved to the world that they started and waged the war solely for their world-supremacy and capitalism, in whose way the military and economic strength of the German people stood. The nation must be enlightened as to the peace conditions. They mean famine and economic ruin, and that the well-to-do classes will have to work for the Entente just as much as the unprotected classes."—(Deutsche Tageszeitung, May 11.)

"Unless democratic Germany insists on a peace of justice and international conciliation, imperial and national egoism, the source of all wars, will prevail. The very manner of preparing and presenting the treaty gives the lie to Wilson's promises and to the demands of reason."—(Berliner Tageblatt, May 6.)

"The Entente prestige among neutrals, and even among its own peoples, has been shattered through its procedure in the armistice, and it remains to be seen whether it will condemn a defenseless people to starvation. As our policy of might went bankrupt, so will theirs too."—(Barth.)

"English and American counselling words about helping us cannot be taken seriously if the Wilson promises are brutally broken. If Germany concludes a might peace of political and economic slavery, there can be no German future whatever. Utter moral collapse is inevitable if our last hope of a new life through hard work is taken from us. Our only weapon is justice. A new and better world can only come about now if Germany takes up the banner—should Wilson drop it—and regardless, reject any other than a peace of justice."—(Same.)

"France fears vanquished Germany in the same way that Germany fears vanquished Russia. Despite all fettering, the permanent fear that the prisoner will break out at the first opportunity. There is but one genuine security for France—real peace, not a peace of might."—(Same.)

"German disarmament is demanded to such a degree that it sinks down to the complete insignificance of a minor state."—(Germania, May 7.)

"Wilson's principles are as roughly handled in the Polish settle-

ment as in that of South Tyrol. The same applies to East Prussia and to the indemnities. The surrender of almost the entire mercantile marine and of our colonies is outright theft. The spirit of revenge has won. Lloyd George has capitulated to the Nationalists, and in league with Clemenceau has forced the American President step by step from his peace principles."—(Same.)

"There is only one prospect for success: if the German Republic is seen to be fighting, not for national advantages or modification of threatened indemnities, but for the new universal principle that justice can never come of sheer might. * * *

"The German proletariat cannot comprehend the Independents' claim for immediate signing. This would deprive us totally of the world's sympathies we so dearly need, and break the backbone of the foreign opposition to the peace of might, and would only mean the resumption of the war on the basis of Germany's non-fulfilment. The Government and working people must insist on Wilson's Points up to the very end. No militarism can solve this world crisis, and the world revolution can only be retarded through signing. Give the peoples a chance to converse and the solution will come soon enough." —(Vorwaerts, May 17.)

"The American attitude and that of Wilson were influenced by the all-powerful Anglo-American financial group."—(Reventlow.)

"The peace terms are a bitter disappointment for all who believed, all too early, in the victory of right and reason in the life of the nations, but they are nevertheless no surprise. The long war has prepared the soil for hate and dispair, yet for the German people no psychosis could be more fatal. We must learn to look at the terms from the European and international point of view. The terms concern all mankind, and the question, whether Europe can survive the economic burdens of the war, comes ahead of the question whether Germany can. The terms must be regarded as a consolidating attempt on the part of America, the future banker of the whole world; as an attempt to sidetrack the bankruptcy of Europe. It seems doubtful whether the plan will succeed, but this does not alter the fact that the European members of the Entente are in the same financial difficulties as we are."—(Germany after the Peace.—G. E. Graf.)

"As soon as Germany signs, she becomes a slave to her former enemies. The malicious spirit of the draft is nowhere so brutally revealed as in the provision that Germany must submit to all future

decisions of the enemy, even though they concern vital problems. * * * Time itself is fighting for reason. The elemental laws of evolution will turn out stronger than the giants, Clemenceau, Lloyd George and Wilson. Revenge cannot endure."—(Hamburger Fremdenblatt, May 17.)

"A sharpening of the blockade and occupation of the Rhenish-Westphalian district would bring the starving workmen to despair, and force Germany to accept within a very short time. By signing, the chance of economic reconstruction is afforded, as well as that of forming a joint socialistic government." (Same.)

CHAPTER X

The Signing of the Treaty.

THE Peace Treaty was handed to the German plenipotentiaries on May seventh and they were given fifteen days to present written observations. There followed six weeks of bitter controversy, recrimination and desperate resistance. On June 16th the German delegates left Paris and on June 20th the German Cabinet resigned. The question was thrown into the German National Assembly and on June 22d that body voted to sign the Treaty, having been notified by the Supreme War Council that the German acceptance must be unconditional. Some difficulty was experienced in finding two citizens who would act as delegates. After some days this was accomplished, and on June 28 the solemn scene in the Salle de Glace at Versailles, in which the signatures were attached, brought the long and remarkable post-war drama to a close.[76]

By turning to the World Almanac for 1920 one may read a succinct but enlightening chronology of the im-

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[76]A New York Times correspondent interviewed President Bauer of the Assembly, June 25. "Has any decision been reached as to who is to sign the treaty," the correspondent asked. "That will be decided tomorrow afternoon," was the answer. "It is not easy to find the right man, because the Entente has made certain conditions limiting our choice, but I hope to find a man by tomorrow who will be willing to sacrifice his own feelings for the sake of the Fatherland. You may imagine that none of our friends is anxious to perpetuate his name by the signing of such a document as the Versailles Treaty."

portant events leading up to the signing. It serves better than many pages of narrative to make the course of events clear and I therefore take the liberty of quoting it here:

"April 12. Peace Conference gave out summary of League of Nations draft.

April 16. The Big Four revealed the terms of peace to the smaller allies.

April 16. The Chamber of Deputies sustained the plan to keep the peace terms secret until signed by Germany.

April 17. The British released a cable to the New York World from H. B. Swope, a correspondent at the Peace Conference, after holding it five days. It had contained exclusive news of the text of the reparations sections of the Treaty.

April 25. The first of the German Peace Delegates arrived at Versailles.

April 28. Peace Conference adopted League Covenant without a dissenting vote. Amendments offered by Japan for racial equality and by France for international police force were withdrawn.

April 29. Main German delegation reached Versailles.

May 1. Germans presented their credentials.

May 6. Secret Plenary Session. Communicated the terms to all the powers represented at the Conference. Foch made a speech in which he said that the security given France by the Treaty was inadequate; that it was his personal conviction that the treaty should not be signed, that France should hold the bridge-heads, and that fifteen years occupation of the Rhineland was not sufficient. Pichon was elected Chairman of the provisional organization of the League of Nations.

May 7. Clemenceau handed treaty to the Germans in the presence of the Peace Conference at the Trianon Palace, giving them fifteen days to present written observations.

May 9. Brockdorff-Rantzau handed note to Clemenceau declaring that the peace treaty contained demands that could be borne by no people, and that many of them are incapable of accomplishment.

May 9. Clemenceau informs him that the allies can admit of no discussion of their right to insist upon the terms substantially as drafted.

May 11. Great demonstration in Germany against signing peace treaty, in Berlin, Breslau, Danzig, Koenigsberg, Cassel, Bochum and other places organized by German Peoples Party.

May 13. Scheidemann tells National Assembly that the peace treaty is not acceptable and is a 'murderous scheme.'

May 14. Mobs hoot United States. German note of protest sent to Paris.

May 21. Peace Conference gives Germany one week, to May 29.

May 23. Peace Conference, in refusing to modify shipping clauses, reminds Germany that only 4,000,000 tons of her ships are to be taken, as against 12,750,000 tons she destroyed in the war.

May 29. Germany delivers counter-proposals. "We came to Versailles expecting to receive a peace proposal framed according to the agreed basis. We had a firm resolve to do everything in our power to fulfill the heavy obligations assumed by us. We hoped for the peace of right which had been promised us. We were shocked when we read in that document the demands which the victorious might of our opponents had set forth. The more we studied the spirit of the treaty the more we were convinced of the impossibility of carrying it out. The demands in the treaty go beyond the strength of the German people."

June 3. Norway joined Switzerland in refusal to participate in blockade of Germany in case of a break in the negotiations.

June 15. Official summary of German reply made public in Paris. It proposed disarmament only in exchange for immediate membership in the League of Nations. It insisted that neutrals should try the Kaiser, and his own people impose punishment. It demanded plebiscites before annexation.

June 16. The reply of the allies. Gave seven days to sign the treaty as modified. German delegation stoned in leaving Versailles for Weimar.

June 20. German Cabinet, headed by Scheidemann, resigned.

June 22. German National Assembly voted 237 to 138 to sign treaty, reserving surrender of Kaiser and extradition of other notables, and declining to acknowledge responsibility for war. The Big Four met, notified Germany her acceptance must be unconditional.

June 23. Germany notifies allies she will accept and sign peace treaty. Her plea of 48 hours delay of ultimatum is refused. Armistice ends at 7 p. m.

June 28. Germany signs through its delegates, Drs. Mueller and Bell. A defensive covenant between Great Britain, France and United States, signed by Lloyd George, Clemenceau and Wilson.

President cabled peace proclamation. Sailed from Brest June 29."

The food blockade was maintained up to the very day of the ratification of the treaty. An Associated Press dispatch from Paris June 29th said:

"Conditioning the raising of the blockade upon Germany's ratification of the treaty is regarded in Conference circles as a sure plan for securing a speedy ratification, because of Germany's food and raw material needs."

This dispatch referred to the action of the Supreme

War Council on June 26 in directing the Supreme Blockade Council to base its arrangements for rescinding restrictions on trade with Germany on the assumption that the blockade is to be raised immediately on the receipt of information that the treaty of peace has been ratified by Germany.

The consummation of the activities of the forces which, following the war, met in the Paris Peace Conference, was attained when the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919, and there the chronicle which these chapters have attempted to incorporate comes to an end. To complete the chronicle, it remains only to make briefly a final capitulation of motive, intent and deed. Tracing swifty the course of the drama from November to June we find that:

1. The Supreme War Council in November secretly repudiated the obligation of the Trianon Palace Hotel contract with Germany, and concerted plans for imposing the entire war cost upon that nation. These plans directly contemplated ruthless spoliation and industrial servitude—the elimination of Germany as an independent power. As they involved breach of faith, desperate moral resistance by the disarmed enemy was to be expected. This was to be overcome by the threat of military occupation, and the pressure of starvation by means of a wartime blockade.

2. The Entente Governments knew themselves to be hopelessly bankrupt. They concealed this fact from the United States Government and people from whom they hoped to secure credits sufficient to save their tottering financial structures. The German signature

to a treaty imposing the obligation of enormous tribute would enable them to enter these prospective assets as credits upon their books, and thereby maintain an appearance of solvency. This was a counsel of desperation, financially dishonest, which involved conscious duplicity on the part of every Entente cabinet in its attitude to the United States and its Executive Branch.

3. By a dishonest political issue in general elections, the British Government committed the English people to the principle of plunder; in concert with the Continentals delegated peace-making power to the Armistice Commission; and, to further the purpose of extortion, established the hunger blockade (the Triangular Framework).

4. These measures were concerted secretly. In order that the American Executive might not know of them they were instituted simultaneously while he was on the high seas.

5. Nothing of the purposes of the Supreme War Council was disclosed to the American President upon his arrival in Paris on December 14. No information of importance concerning Germany reached him except through the Supreme War Council. He was permitted to believe that the Entente Governments adhered to his agreement with Germany for a peace of moderation, and the establishment of a league of nations, based upon the principle of international good-will, and including enemy nations, to which also the Entente cabinets were legally committed. For three weeks this illusion was unremittingly sustained. The President brought whole-hearted trust and good faith toward the

Entente Governments, and believed that these sentiments were reciprocated.

It was a cardinal principle of the Supreme War Council to preserve this state of mind as long as possible; an open breach with the United States would be fatal to their purposes. While protesting adherence to his principles they used the Bissolati incident in Italy to deprive him of influence over Italian public opinion, having already deprived him of leadership in England by the general elections.

6. On January 12 the President's consent to renewal of the powers of the Armistice Commission for thirty days must be obtained. Here the effort was made by surprise to stampede him into acquiescence in a Napoleonic reconstruction of Europe. In the confusion which this vaster plan introduced, the renewal of the armistice on their own terms was effected by the Europeans. The President was astounded. He began to realize for the first time that he was in the presence of forces with which he had not reckoned and was not familiar.

7. The necessity of secrecy in the proceedings was now urged upon him. Developments in the meeting of the Supreme War Council on January 12 had shaken his confidence that unity of purpose existed between the United States and the Entente. His sense of loyalty to the allies of the United States in the war forbade him to contemplate a breach. He did not yet suspect treachery. He agreed to secrecy in the negotiations.

8. In the proceedings of the Peace Conference from January 12 to February 14 the Europeans system-

atically undermined President Wilson's position. The President was surrounded with strange and unfamiliar forces—a subconscious realization of betrayal was developing. There were appalling hazards on all sides. Motives which he had thought to be the same as his own were growing obscure. The ground on which he stood was unstable.

Punitive damages was unthinkable under the agreement with the enemy; yet punitive damages were being hinted. Even the President's American advisers seemed uncertain about this. It obtruded itself daily with increasing emphasis. Other important matters were constantly being delayed unaccountably. The appropriateness of the League of Nations, which all had once proclaimed, was beginning to be questioned.

9. February 14 arrived. The armistice had been renewed, in spite of American protest, on shockingly harsh terms. The Reparations Commission had overwhelmingly declared, contrary to the position of its American members, that the Trianon Hotel Pact did not constitute a limitation upon the right of the associated nations to impose indemnities. The President refused to accept this judgment; on the same day, February 14, the French in Plenary Session refused adherence to the Covenant of the League. President Wilson sailed for America the next day. Government propaganda for four weeks in the French press had destroyed the President's influence over public opinion in France.

10. The members of the Supreme War Council were morally certain by February 14 that President

Wilson would abide by the obligation of secrecy in negotiations which he had taken after the meeting of the Supreme War Council on January 12, because of his aversion to a diplomatic breach, no matter what the outcome of the Conference. This removed the only menace to the Entente Peace. Hence, during the President's absence in America they proceeded with the preparation of the crushing peace precisely as if he had categorically agreed to the principle of punitive damages.

11. In the interlude in America the President, still under the spell of secrecy, let the opportunity go by to inform the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate (and the people) that a peace of vengeance impended, and that he needed American support to counteract it. He had subconsciously reached the decision to abandon the fight against the imposition of punitive damages upon Germany; this decision was reached between the 10th and 14th of February. In America he proclaimed the League of Nations to be the real issue in the conference negotiations. His sense of values had become impaired, and he himself had come to think that if the League was established the wrongs which Europe was perpetrating could be remedied afterwards. But the League of Nations was a matter of political controversy in the United States, and he returned to Europe without the support of his own country behind him, even on this new and factitious issue. Had he informed American public opinion of his position on the issue of punitive damages he might have turned defeat at Paris into victory.

12. The Supreme War Council, on the President's return, no longer feared the danger of public disclosures. In the Council of Four there was brutal frankness. The President had no avenue of escape. Reluctant adherence to the principle of punitive damages was given, and the practical settlements already fully prepared were endorsed. The Treaty was quickly drafted; the covenant of a League of Nations not inconsistent with the Entente Peace was incorporated in it.

13. As to Germany; the Supreme War Council from the outset had represented the German attitude as treacherous, and had deceived the Americans into this belief. It had exaggerated internal disorders in Germany and prevented a movement for a quick preliminary peace by insisting that there was no government there capable of negotiating, when, as a matter of fact, Germany possessed a de jure government capable of making peace in February. It had wrung German consent to the terms of a crushing treaty by unremitting military menace and the terrors of a rigid food blockade. When the point of actual starvation was reached in April, half the gold in the Reichsbank was taken as a guarantee of payment for food to be delivered, and signatures extorted relinquishing German property rights, as recited in the financial clauses of the Treaty of Versailles. The German struggle against the yoke of slavery continued in the stubborn refusal of the delegates at Versailles to sign. The delivery of food cargoes in April and May, according to contract, and the privileges of navigation, were sus-

pended by the Supreme War Council until the German National Assembly capitulated and sent plenipotentiaries who signed the Treaty on June 28.

The presence of elements in the foreign relations of governments, and peculiarities in the nature of sovereignty itself, are revealed by the Versailles peace settlement, which have not been understood in the United States, by the people or the government, and which are new to American psychology. The tremendous changes in political environment which are taking place among the nations of the world, give warning that international conjunctures will arise in the future which may bear profoundly upon the peace and security of the United States. There are no lessons which can teach so much of value to the American patriot as those which the Versailles peace settlement have clearly written.

The United States of America is the only nation in which the control of foreign affairs is in the hands of the people. Here an administration does not dare to commit the people to a foreign policy without their consent. In Europe foreign policy is exclusively in the hands of a ruling group. In foreign negotiation ministries run but one hazard—the risk of failure in their efforts to attain national advantage.

In the administration of the British Empire, the opinion of the people of England is seldom invoked or regarded. Imperial policy is not settled at the polls. The King's prerogative is enormous; the House of Lords is the body from which all important Imperial executive positions are filled; the decrees of the Privy Council far transcend in importance any laws passed

by the House of Commons. Foreign policy is a continuing thing and is not subject to serious modification in general elections.

In France the establishment of the Third Republic did not greatly change French institutions. There remains a French aristocracy and a French peasantry. France is an oligarchy, in which a ruling class dominates national policy. Changes in ministry merely transfer administrative authority from one group within this ruling class to another. Issues of foreign policy are never referred to decision at the polls.

Italy is a constitutional monarchy, the Chamber of Deputies is always divided by faction, and the administration of government is thrown back upon the Crown. The foreign office is highly organized and foreign affairs remain continuously, as in France, in the hands of a governing group.

In Europe the theory is not held that sovereignty lies in the hands of the people. The capacity of the people for self-government, in the American sense, is not admitted by the ruling classes or asserted by the people themselves. In Europe war and the danger of war has conditioned the governmental structure.

President Wilson's mind was impressed with the power of the people, and with their sacred right to dominate government. He lived and moved among a population of a hundred millions where there was no question which a verdict under the Australian ballot system did not settle. Under the American form of government he knew the power of the popular will.

The basic error in President Wilson's calculations,

with reference to Europe, was the conviction that the will of the people in Europe was capable of controlling governments. Acting upon this conviction, he sought through the people to dominate the negotiations, only to find that the governments were dominating the people. Unable through their peoples to control the European negotiators, he found himself constrained to adopt the traditional methods of secret negotiation.

The political impotence of the Entente peoples brought bitter disillusionment to the President. In England, France and Italy they had responded enthusiastically to his political philosophy. They desired to see the vindication of his principles. But they were literally incapable of moving their own governments.

On the 8th of June a Dutch journalist published an interview with the President which reveals how greatly, in the opinion of the President, the popular will in Europe had failed to respond to its opportunities.

"The writer obtained the impression that besides the establishment of peace, the President considers the establishment of the League of Nations as his great task. It appeared again and again in the conversation that the League is his first object and purpose, his hope for the future. All peace problems are converted into terms of the League of Nations and controlling war. He hopes and anticipates that when once the work of the League is being carried out, the shortcomings in the peace plans will come right automatically.

"The President held to his Fourteen Points as firmly as he could without jeopardizing the entire peace. He had remained as firm as a rock with reference to Orlando and the Austro-Italian frontier.

"Anyone in expressing an opinion with reference to the alleged lack of consistency between certain peace conditions and the Fourteen Points, and who states that America ought to have withdrawn unless all the Fourteen Points were adopted according to the strictest interpretation, may very well ask himself what would have happened in that case.

"The conditions of the peace are hard, but undoing the wrong necessitates hard conditions. The intention of the Council of Four was to 'etch' upon the political consciousness of the world that the peoples are responsible, and shall be held responsible in the future, for all that their governments do. They will no longer be able to relieve themselves of the actions of their governments by saying that those governments acted without their approval. They may not satisfy themselves with regard to the wrong actions of their governments by adopting a passive attitude or by mere criticism. They must take care to obtain better governments. The world must not only be safe for democracy; the democracies must also feel themselves responsible for what their tools, the governments, do.

"The President made no secret of the fact that he was not an admirer of European politics. The European peoples show themselves as being rather indifferent to the actions of their governments. Even in the democratic countries the people seldom show continued, timely, leading or preventive initiation in the matter of what their governments do. They do not possess the right means of continually expressing their will and making their influence constantly felt.

"In President Wilson's view one of the first needs of the Continent of Europe is to raise the standard of the political mind and the feeling of responsibility of the European citizens. According to the President the will of the people must continually act as the rudder of the ship of state, and cannot be satisfied with choosing a captain and crew from time to time."

Thus, in the Paris Peace Conference, two irreconcilable philosophies of government were in contact, and a harmonious settlement could not be reached. Overwhelming advantages in negotiation lay with the adherents of the old tradition. Had the Entente governments been democracies, with a political and social organization like that of the United States, with executives and congresses responsive to the popular will, the Peace Conference might have taken on the aspects of a world parliament, in which the will of the majority afforded a sufficient sanction for its decisions. This, perhaps, was a condition precedent in the absence of which President Wilson's world settlement could not have been made to prevail.

Having in mind the hazardous political environment in which the nations of Europe find themselves, it seems too much to hope that they will reform their institutions upon the American model at an early date. Until that time comes, it would seem the part of prudence for the people of the United States to familiarize themselves with the lessons to be drawn from the Versailles peace settlement, in order that in future negotiations there may be an adequate understanding of that curious type of mentality which the European standard of international negotiation produces.